



## Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

The primary purpose of this policy is that it deals with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils. It is applicable to all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The policy is formally reviewed by Governors on an annual basis. Interim reviews are carried out by the DSL Philippa Mathews. Minor updates are reported to all staff and Governors.

The policy is published on the school website and is available as a hard copy on request. An electronic copy is available to all staff on the School's document management platform.

Contents		Page
1	Policy statement	2
2	Definition of safeguarding	3
3	Principles	3
4	Inter-agency working	4
5	Related documentation	4
6	Safer recruitment	4
7	<b>CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES</b>	<b>5</b>
8	Key contacts	9
9	Management of child protection matters	11
10	The role of the Safeguarding Lead	12
11	Training	13
12	Teaching pupils about safeguarding	13
13	Types of abuse	14
14	Signs of abuse	17
15	Preventing Radicalisation	17
16	Allegations against staff	18
17	Allegations against pupils (Peer on peer/child on child abuse)	19
18	Confidentiality and information sharing	20
19	Other safeguarding arrangements	21
20	Related policies	22
21	Monitoring and review	22
	Appendix 1: Reporting form	23
	Appendix 2: Allegations against staff	25
	Appendix 3: Further information on the types and signs of abuse	29
	Appendix 4: Signposting to further information	36
	Appendix 5: Contact details ( <i>Children and Families Hub Partner and Access Map</i> )	37
	Appendix 6: Key safeguarding facts	38

## 1. Policy Statement

Our commitment is to safeguard and promote the welfare, health (including mental health) and safety of our pupils by creating and maintaining an open, safe, caring and supportive atmosphere. This includes:

- Proactively teaching pupils about safeguarding.
- Ensuring that systems and procedures are in place to protect pupils.
- Acting in the best interests of the child.

St Philomena's School is committed to acting in the best interests of the child. All the school's Governors are responsible for ensuring that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. This policy has been authorised by the Governors, is available to parents on request and is published on the school website. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

This policy and procedure applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, peripatetic, contract staff, volunteers, governors and any other adults working at the school, even where this is away from the school, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit. All references in this document to "staff" or "members of staff" should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned, unless otherwise stated. This also applies to adults in the early years phase of the school (Reception class).

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances.

If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. We encourage all staff to be vigilant to the signs of abuse and to report any concerns to the DSL.

All staff have the following responsibilities:

- Contribute to providing a safe environment in which all children can learn and flourish.
- Know what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being abused or neglected.
- Know what to do if they are concerned about the behaviour or conduct of an adult in the school.
- Manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Identify children who may benefit from Early Help.
- Refer any concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL.
- Be aware of our local Early Help process and the school's role in it.
- Be aware of the process for making a referral to Children's Social Care and understand the role they might be expected to play in statutory assessments

**It is important to remember that anyone can make a referral at any time.**

*For contact details on how to make a referral, see Access Map in Appendix 5, page 34.*

**In our school safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.**

## 2. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action in the best interests of the child to ensure the best outcomes.

Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse which, in this policy, means any kind of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*). For further information see Appendix 3. All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access services that meet their particular needs.

There is an important distinction between safeguarding children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm (where cases should be reported to children's social care immediately) and action required to promote the welfare of children in need of additional support even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.

## 3. Principles

St Philomena's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that pupils cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure. We therefore aim to provide a school environment which promotes self-confidence, a feeling of self-worth and the knowledge that pupils' concerns will be listened to and acted upon. The children are taught about safeguarding and are made aware of who the Safeguarding Team are. All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding training annually, including online safety, as well as regular up-dates in meetings and staff briefings throughout the year. We recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

The School will take all reasonable measures to:

- Ensure that its safeguarding arrangements follow the procedures and practice of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) (or other LSCB as may be appropriate) and safeguarding partners as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by it.
- Ensure that early help support is provided as soon as a problem emerges.
- Protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil or child.
- Be alert to signs of abuse both in the school and from outside.
- Deal appropriately and promptly with every suspicion or complaint of abuse and to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- Design and operate procedures which promote this policy
- Design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others within the school community who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations.
- Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan where these are in place.
- Be alert to the medical needs of children with medical conditions.
- Operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures.
- Take all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances permit.
- Have regard to statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education (DfE) in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and associated regulations.
- Review and consider how pupils should be taught about safeguarding.

- Identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified in order to fulfil the Prevent duty.
- Ensure that all governors and staff are aware of their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding through appropriate training which is regularly renewed, and other annual updates.

#### **4. Inter-Agency Working**

The school is committed to inter-agency working in order to secure the best levels of safeguarding for all of its pupils. The school contributes to inter-agency working in accordance with statutory guidance outlined in Working together to Safeguard Children (2019). The school works with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. The school will also work within the requirements of their Safeguarding Partners and their Child Death Review partners, which will come into force by 29th September 2019.

#### **5. Related Documentation**

This policy is based on KCSIE 2021 and any references to national guidance made within this document are in relation to the versions listed below. The school will always refer to statutory guidance as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice and decision making.

##### *National documents:*

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2021)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (September 2018)
- What do to if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners (September 2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, July 2018)
- Information Sharing – Advice for practitioners (July 2018)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (April 2021)
- The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (September 2021)
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) (December 2020)
- Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities (September 2016)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, September 2021)
- Child Sexual Exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners (DfE, February 2017)
- The Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, July 2017)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, November 2018)

##### *Local documents:*

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, October 2019)
- Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB, July 2017)
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements 2020-21 (ESCB, June 2020)

#### **6. Safer Recruitment**

Our school prioritises embedding a culture of safer recruitment as part of our strategy for preventing harm to children. Statutory procedures for checking the suitability of staff and volunteers who work with children are always followed. These are detailed in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

The School will take all reasonable measures to:

- Ensure that we carry out all necessary checks on the suitability of people who serve on the school's governing body in accordance with the above regulations and guidance given in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021).
- Ensure members of the senior leadership team are safer recruitment trained.
- Ensure that where the School ceases to use the services of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) because that person was considered unsuitable to work with children, a detailed report is made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as soon as possible after the person has ceased to provide services to the School and in any event within one month of the person leaving the school. The LADO will also be informed. This includes dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed-term contract, no longer using a supply teacher engaged directly or supplied by an agency, terminating the placement of a trainee or volunteer, no longer using staff employed by a contractor and resignation and voluntary withdrawal from any of the above. Where a dismissal does not reach the DBS referral threshold, consideration will be given to making a referral to the Department for Education and Teaching Regulation Agency. Reasons for making such a referral would include: unacceptable professional conduct; conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute; or a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence.
- Ensure that where staff from another organisation are working with our pupils on another site, we have received confirmation that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to those staff and that any such checks do not raise any issues of concern in relation to the suitability of those staff members to work with children.

## 7. Child Protection Procedures

### 7.1 PROCEDURES WHEN A MEMBER OF STAFF IS WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD



If a child tells a member of staff that they know about or have been a victim of abuse or neglect, the member of staff must:

- Stay calm and sympathetic. Listen carefully Listen carefully and allow the child to speak freely. Do not interrupt the child or be afraid of silences.
- Reassure the child and use words such as, "I am so sorry this has happened", "You are doing the right thing in talking to me", but **do not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality**. Explain that you need to pass the information to a member of staff who will ensure that the correct action is taken. Do not make promises that you can't keep such as "everything will be alright". Avoid saying things like, "I wish you had told me about this earlier" or "I cannot believe what I am hearing".
- Not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer. Ask open questions that will encourage a secure and sympathetic environment for the child, such as "is there anything else you want to tell me?". Questioning of the child about what they are saying should not be extensive, as partner agencies will lead any investigation. However, a context around what the child has said should always be sought prior to any referral being made to partner agencies. This should be done by the DSL or DDSL, depending on who obtained the initial disclosure - **if a member of teaching staff receives a disclosure or has a concern, the DSL should then also speak to the child, either to corroborate the child's account or to gain further context**. Limit questioning to the minimum necessary for clarification using What, When, How and Where, but avoid leading questions such as, "Has this happened to your siblings?" Do not use questions beginning with Why as this can apportion feelings of guilt within a child.

- If the child is a victim of abuse, they must be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- If the child discloses abuse, it is appropriate to ask whether any other adults were present and observed the abuse and whether the abuse has happened before.
- At an appropriate time, tell the child that the matter will be referred in confidence, **always using language that is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child**, allowing for their individual need.
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may want to accompany you to see the DSL, otherwise let the child know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.

## 7.2 Recording information:

Staff should make a written record of the conversation with the child as soon as possible, using a 'Record of Concern Form' (Appendix 1; available from the staffroom). The written account should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Staff should use the specific words that the child used (for example, if referring to parts of their body), indicating these by using "speech marks/inverted commas". The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials.

If a disclosure of abuse has been made by the child, staff should immediately discuss the concerns verbally with the DSL, or Deputy DSL prior to writing up the record so that immediate action can be considered.

If the DSL is not available then this should not delay appropriate action being taken and staff should speak to one of the DDSLs or, failing that, the Deputy Head. If there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child and you are not able to follow this referral procedure, contact the Children and Families Hub where the child lives (see Appendix 5 for contact numbers). If there is an immediate emergency, dial 999 and report the matter to the police. The Headteacher should be made aware of any referral that is made to Social Care or the police, but staff must not delay if they are unavailable before making the referral.

No further action should be taken by the person making the report unless specifically requested by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Information should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and the matter must not be discussed with others.

Preserving evidence: All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

If the concern involves a member of staff, the Headteacher must be informed. Details of procedures for reporting allegations against members of staff are given at section 16 and Appendix 2.

## 7.3 Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on receiving a notification of concern

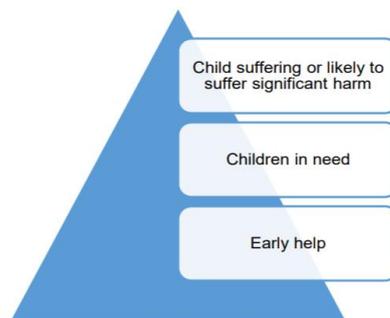
The Designated Safeguarding Lead will, when taking action:

- Clarify the issues with the person raising the concern.
- Liaise with a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to agree on the next steps, depending on the seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to social services and the police immediately.

- Consider the wishes of the pupil who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil's wishes.
- Consider the wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk, she may take further advice from the relevant professionals before informing parents. A disclosure to children's services may be made without prior contact with a child's parents.
- Depending on the nature of the disclosure, advice will be sought from social services as to when to notify the complainant's parents.
- Consider duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.

#### 7.4 Stages of Child Protection/Types of Referral

The school can use a range of arrangements, depending on the information available. The school will always work cooperatively with external agencies, including the local authority and the police. The diagram below outlines the hierarchy of these approaches:



Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and, if appropriate, the police) is made immediately by the DSL, who should follow the local authority's referral process.

- **Early help:** If the child is considered to be a concern and is not at risk of suffering immediate significant harm but requires additional support, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer the child to children's social services department where the child lives. Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (for example education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency early help assessment and procedures will be put in place by children's services to arrange this. The school will coordinate with the local inter-agencies involved and safeguarding partners.
- **Children in need:** A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of services, or a child who is disabled.
- Where a disclosure relates to the mental health of a pupil and they are at risk from themselves rather than a third party, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of the pupil. In some cases, parental consent is sought and referrals may be made to Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS) or private health care professionals.
- Where a child has suffered or is at risk of significant harm and the matter does not involve a member of staff, a referral will be made to children's social care where the child lives within 24 hours. Where there are concerns about a member of staff's suitability to work with children, a referral will be made to the LADO. When deciding whether to make a referral, the Headteacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead will not draw their own conclusions over what appear to be borderline cases and if there is room

for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, and depending on the nature of the case, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult with either the LADO or the Children and Families Hub, without identifying the family. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will confirm the referral in writing to social services within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact social services again.

- Where a child is deemed to be at risk of radicalisation, the above procedures will be followed and a referral may also be made to the Channel programme.

### **7.5 EYFS (Reception Class)**

The safety and well being of all our pupils at St Philomena's School, from the Early Years Foundation Stage right through to Form VI, is our highest priority. Photographs of all those entitled to collect children from the EYFS setting are kept on record and children will only be released to those on file. If parents or designated persons are unable to collect a child for any reason, the parents are required to email the school office giving permission for someone else to collect them. This email must include the full name of the person and a photograph of them.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for safeguarding children within the Early Years setting and liaising with local children's agencies as appropriate. They also undertake training specific to the EYFS. It is essential that Ofsted and ISI are informed as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at least within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children at the premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.

In the event of disqualification of a person employed in early years provision, the School will not continue to employ that person.

The School will give Ofsted the following information when relevant:

- Details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006.
- The date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose.
- The body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed.
- A certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

### **7.6 Special Educational Needs**

Children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. Staff are trained to respond to individual needs and to support pupils encouraging mentoring where necessary, support and guidance is also available from the school SENCO. The school identifies the need to explore certain behaviours this can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers, and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

### **7.7 Whistleblowing**

All adults have a responsibility to report any concerns about poor or unsafe practice, including those in relation to the care and protection of a pupil or pupils. If a member of staff believes that best practice in this area is not being adhered to or that practice may put a pupil or pupils at risk, they should report their concerns immediately to the Headteacher, or in her absence the Deputy Head.

If the member of staff feels unable to raise their concern with the Headteacher (or the Deputy Head), they should contact the Chair of Governors.

Concerns raised under this Whistleblowing Policy are distinct from concerns or allegations about an adult's suitability to work with or have access to children. No member of staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine concern about unsafe practice, provided that they do so in good faith and follow the whistleblowing procedures. Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence. Further detail on whistleblowing procedures is outlined in the School's Whistleblowing Policy.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may contact the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line.

## 7.8 Summary

Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the School will be taken seriously and in line with published local thresholds will be referred to an external agency such as the children's social care department in the relevant local authority (Essex) or the child protection unit of the police, without investigation within the School. In these cases, the following referral procedures apply:

- **If the allegation is against a member of staff**, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL, the allegation should be reported to the Headteacher immediately. The matter will be referred by the Headteacher to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. Any doubts or concerns may be discussed informally with the LADO, initially on a "no names" basis.
- **If the allegation is against the Headteacher**, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of Governors, or in her absence the Deputy Chair, without first notifying the Headteacher. The Chair of Governors, or in her absence the Deputy Chair, will liaise with the LADO and relevant agencies as required.
- **If an allegation is made against the Chair of Governors or another Governor**, the allegation should be reported to the Headteacher. In either case, any such allegations will be discussed with the LADO within one working day before further action is taken.
- **If a child has suffered harm or is at risk of harm** but the allegation does not involve a member of staff or a professional person, the matter will be referred by the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the children's social care department where the child lives.

## 8. Key Contacts

### 8.1 Contacts within school

Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Philippa Mathews	01255 674492	headteacher@stphilomenas.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kathryn Oxley	01255 674492	koxley@stphilomenas.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Bethan Venables	01255 674492	bvenables@stphilomenas.com
Chairman of Governors	Mrs J Geldard		geldard01@btinternet.com
Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding	Mrs A O'Sullivan	01255 569379	avrilosullivan12@gmail.com
Deputy Chair of Governors	Mrs M Fuller		marcifuller@hotmail.com

### 8.2 Local Authority Contacts

The LSCB for Essex (also known as ESCB) ensures the coordination of safeguarding work by all agencies and monitors the effectiveness of child protection work across the three local authority areas. Further information can be found on the [escb@essex.gov.uk](mailto:escb@essex.gov.uk) website.

All staff should follow the procedures in this policy if they have concerns about a child and speak to the Designated Lead or deputies. However all adults have the right to contact social services direct via the contacts listed below should they not be satisfied with the actions of the designated persons.

If the DSL/Headteacher or deputy designated staff are not available and there is a risk of immediate serious significant harm to a child anyone can report abuse or discuss concerns in relation to children and young people. The Children and Families Hub can be contacted on 0345 603 7627. Out of office hours the emergency duty team can be contacted on 0345 606 1212. In an immediate emergency dial 999 and report the matter to the police.

**ANY MEMBER OF STAFF CAN CONTACT SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECT IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD:**

The telephone numbers for children’s social care for the authority near to the School:

Role	Name	Telephone	Email/Online
Call for Advice and Guidance	Children & Families Hub	0345 603 7627	<a href="http://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/">www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/</a>
Online request for <b>non urgent</b> support	Children & Families Hub	Complete a Request for Support Form	<a href="http://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/">www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/</a>
Child Protection Immediate Risk	The Essex Safeguarding Children’s Board (ESCB)	03330 135371	<a href="http://www.escb.co.uk">www.escb.co.uk</a>
Duty Line for NEW referrals	Children’s Workforce Allegations Team	03330 139797	Room C228, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH. Email: <a href="mailto:escb@essex.gov.uk">escb@essex.gov.uk</a>
<b>Out of Hours</b> If a concern is raised outside of office hours, and you think a referral to Social Care is required you should contact Essex Social care	Essex Social care	0345 606 1212	<a href="mailto:childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk">childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk</a> (please note this is not a secure address so any information sent must be password protected)
Local authority Designated Officer for child protection (LADO)	Jacquie Wilkes	01245 436635	<a href="mailto:jacquie.wilkes@essex.gov.uk">jacquie.wilkes@essex.gov.uk</a>

**8.3 National Contacts**

**Prevent/counter-extremism contacts:**

Local Police Force	Essex Police	101 (non- emergency) 999 (emergency)	<a href="mailto:PREVENT@essex.pnn.police.uk">PREVENT@essex.pnn.police.uk</a>
Anti-Terrorist Hotline		0800 789 321	
DfE dedicated non-emergency helpline		0207 340 7264	<a href="mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk">counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk</a>
Essex County Council	Prevent Safeguarding Coordinator		<a href="mailto:jo.barclay@essex.gov.uk">jo.barclay@essex.gov.uk</a>

The following telephone numbers may also be useful:

Organisation	Telephone	Email
Childline	0800 1111	
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Text line	88858	
NSPCC FGM helpline	0800 028 3550	fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line for professionals (8am – 8pm)	0800 028 0285	
Kidscape (Anti-bullying helpline for parents)	0845 120 5204	
Child Exploitation Online Prevention (CEOP)	0870 000 3344	
Samaritans	116 123	
The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (LFF)	0800 1000 900	help@stopitnow.org.uk www.parentsprotect.co.uk
National Bullying Helpline	0845 22 55 787	
UK Safer Internet Centre helpline for School Staff	0844 381 4772	helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
Internet Watch Foundation hotline for reporting criminal content		www.iwf.org.uk
Educate Against Hate		http://educateagainsthate.com
Colchester Police Station	01206 762212	
Ofsted (General Enquiries)	0300 123 1231	enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Ofsted's Whistleblower Hotline	0300 123 3155	whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS),	03000 200 190	
Teaching Regulation Agency	0207 593 5393	misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk
Department for Education	0207 340 7264	
Independent Schools Inspectorate	0207 6000100	

## 9. Management of Child Protection Matters

The Board of Governors takes seriously its responsibility to uphold the aims of the charity and its duty to promote an environment in which children can feel secure and safe from harm. They facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding where all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at heart, ensuring that the child's best wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining appropriate action.

The nominated Governor for safeguarding is Avril O'Sullivan. She instigates a review of the school's safeguarding procedures on behalf of the Board and reports to the Board annually, making any recommendations for improvements. The nominated Governor also discusses safeguarding matters with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at least termly and reports to the Board at each meeting.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the procedures outlined in this policy are followed on a day to day basis.

The School has appointed a senior member of staff with the necessary status and authority (Designated Safeguarding Lead) to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. Parents are welcome to approach the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they have any concerns about the welfare of any child in the school, whether these concerns relate to their own child or any other. If preferred, parents may

discuss concerns in private with the child's class teacher who will notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with these procedures.

#### **10. The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Designated Person for the School is Philippa Mathews who may be contacted on 01255 674492.

There are 4 key elements to the DSL role. They:

- Manage referrals
- Work with others
- Train
- Raise awareness

The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are:

- To be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection.
- To act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- To refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.
- To co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the School.
- To maintain an ongoing training programme for all School employees, Governors, volunteers and other individuals working at the school, including induction training for all such individuals, and provide regular updates.
- To take ultimate responsibility for online safety within school, ensuring all staff are trained in online safety and all pupils are taught about how to stay safe online.
- To monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection which are kept separate from pupil records.
- To ensure that notification of further record keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- To liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate, and the Children and Families Hub (Essex).
- To keep parents informed of action to be taken under these procedures in relation to their child.
- To meet with the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- To monitor records of pupils in the School who are subject to a child protection plan to ensure that this is maintained and updated as notification is received.
- To liaise with other professionals to ensure that the School contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018). This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children who are subject to child protection plans.
- To ensure that locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by the LSCB (and any other LSCB as appropriate) are followed.
- To advise and act on all suspicions, concerns and/or evidence of the need for children to receive additional support, or of children who have suffered or are likely to suffer abuse and/or neglect, which is reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Where appropriate, to take part in child protection conferences or reviews.
- To inform social services in writing when a child who is subject to a child protection plan moves to another school and to ensure the secure transfer of the child protection file to the pupil's new school (and that it is sent separately from the main pupil file).
- Keep and maintain records of staff training on child protection and safer recruitment procedures.
- To notify the Disclosure and Barring Service and LADO if the School ceases to use the services of a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) because they are unsuitable to work with children.

- To liaise with the local Channel Panel if a child is deemed to be at risk of radicalisation.

If the designated person is unavailable her duties will be carried out by one of the deputy designated members of staff who have received appropriate training. The deputy designated officers are Mrs Kathryn Oxley and Miss Bethan Venables who may be contacted on 01255 674492.

## **11. Training**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy designated staff have undertaken Level 3 child protection training and training in inter-agency working and attend refresher training at two-yearly intervals. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the appropriate authority and has been given the necessary time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out this role. They have undertaken Level 3 child protection training for the EYFS.

Staff employed in school: All staff employed in school receive annual safeguarding and child protection training in accordance with advice provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and safeguarding partners for Essex, usually at the commencement of the academic year. Staff also receive safeguarding and child protection updates regularly throughout the year, provided by the DSL, in order to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, for example, learning about the topics in Annex B (KSCIE 2021). Within the training staff will be briefed on the need to regard children's social sphere and respond accordingly to contextual factors.

All teaching staff undertake Prevent training every three years.

New staff: All new staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with induction training that includes this policy, the Attendance Policy (which includes Children Missing from Education), the Staff Code of Conduct, the Digital Safety Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy, the School's Behaviour Policy, the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and a copy of Part 1 and Annex B of the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021). All staff are required to read Part 1 and Annex B of this guidance each time it is updated.

Third-party contractors: It is good practice for those employed as third-party contractors who work regularly in school with the opportunity for contact with pupils to have basic safeguarding training, at a level appropriate to their role.

## **12. Teaching Pupils About Safeguarding**

The school is committed to proactively teaching children about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of our approach to offering a broad and balanced curriculum. Through ongoing work with the children, we aim to build resilience so that every child knows that we are a 'telling school' and that speaking up about any concern is valued and actively promoted. This includes raising a concern about themselves or about another.

Safeguarding is taught in the following ways:

- Through ICT and PSHE lessons
- Assemblies including guest speakers from the NSPCC.
- School Council meetings.
- Bikeability for Form VI.
- Road safety for Form V.

Relationships education is compulsory in all primary schools and we follow the RSE policy for Catholic schools. Our approach to this is one of knowledge, inclusion, equality and acceptance. Pupils in all year groups will have RSE delivered at an age appropriate level with sensitivity. Parents and carers are notified in advance of topics and subjects being covered; we encourage all pupils to participate.

We actively promote the view that children should feel able to raise any concerns that they may have. This includes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. We take the following measures to ensure that children know how to raise a concern:

- Signage with photos outlining the safeguarding team.
- In communal areas posters are displayed with various agencies' contact details including NSPCC and Child Line.
- Reminders in lessons and assemblies.
- School Council meetings.
- Through our school prefects.

### Online Safety

All staff should be aware of the risks posed to children by technology and the internet and should understand their role in preventing, identifying and responding to harm caused by its use. All staff should be familiar with the school's Digital Safety Policy which sets out the school's approach to online safety in further detail.

The school has suitable filtering and monitoring in place to protect pupils from online abuse and no child has access to technology within school without adult supervision. The ICT room is out of bounds to all pupils during break and lunch times. During ICT lessons staff raise awareness of reporting abuse on line and highlight the support from CEOP's. Whilst we advise pupils about the risks of online abuse we also raise awareness to the use of technology in facilitating off line abuse, the use of persuasion, blackmail, and coercion. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend an annual online safety workshop funded by the local council. Children and parents are advised to activate filtering on their devices to protect them from accessing inappropriate material on 3/4/5G networks.

Remote Learning: Keeping pupils, and teachers safe during remote education is essential. Teachers delivering remote education online must be aware that the same principles set out in the Staff Code of Conduct apply.

The DSL has ultimate responsibility for online safety within school.

### 13. Types of Abuse



The term 'abuse' is often used as an umbrella term. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Abuse or safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

## Specific Safeguarding Concerns

**Domestic Abuse:** 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. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

**Sexual harassment** is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature (in the context of child on child) that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. Taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence.

**Children missing education:** A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Our school recognises that early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Our school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. Parents must ensure the school has two emergency contacts for their children. Regular attendance reviews take place and it may require meetings between parents and the school to establish support for those with poor attendance.

**Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation:** Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. It is important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Staff must be aware that it is not just boys who are at risk of criminal exploitation. However, the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys and the indicators may not be the same.

The risk of CSE and CCE are addressed as part of the PSHEE programme of work on sexuality and sexual development, choice and consent, healthy relationships, harmful social norms and abusive behaviours and online safety.

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** Where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

**County Lines:** A geographically widespread form of harm where children and vulnerable adults are 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 be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. 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. Staff should be aware of the signs of criminal exploitation such as children missing education. More information can be found in KCSIE (2021).

**Grooming** is the process by which an individual prepares a child, significant adults and the environment for abuse of this child. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know. Groomers may be male or female, of any gender identity. They could be any age. Many children and young people do not understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. The signs of grooming are not always obvious. Groomers will also go to great lengths not to be identified.

**Upskirting** is a criminal offence and typically refers to the taking of a photo under someone’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm’. Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are more vulnerable, and there may be barriers in recognising abuse in this group of children. In addition, children who are perceived by their peers to be LGBT or identify themselves as LGBT may be more vulnerable. It is covered under the Voyeurism Act 2019.

**Female Genital Mutilation:** FGM is abuse that encompasses all procedures involved in the partial or total removal of female external genitalia and is illegal in the UK. Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy DSL) with regard to any concerns about FGM, **there is a specific legal duty on teachers under the FGM Act (2003) to report FGM.** If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, it is mandatory that the teacher must report this to the police using the telephone number 101.

**Forced marriage:** Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. FM is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage.

**Honour based abuse (HBA)** includes all incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the community and/or the family, and commonly involve practices such as FGM, forced marriage and/or breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is, therefore, important to be aware of this dynamic and consider risk factors when deciding on what action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as

such. Staff need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA and if they have a concern they should alert their DSL immediately.

#### 14. Signs of Abuse

Possible signs of abuse include the following (but are not limited to and do not necessarily mean that abuse is occurring).

- The pupil says they have been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.
- There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.
- The pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour. For example they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive or withdrawn.
- The pupil does not want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities.
- The pupil is having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry.
- The pupil talks about being left home alone, with carers that appear to be inappropriate or with strangers.
- The pupil is regularly missing from school or education.
- The pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.
- The pupil's development is delayed in terms of emotional progress.
- The pupil suddenly loses or gains weight.
- The pupil drinks alcohol regularly from an early age.
- The pupil is concerned for younger siblings without explaining why.
- The pupil talks about running away.
- The pupil shies away from being touched or flinches at sudden movements.
- The pupil demonstrates undue anxiety, over-reacts to problems and demonstrates an excessive fear of making mistakes.
- The pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.
- The pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by her parents or carers.

*Further guidance is given in Appendix 3. Staff will also find it useful to refer to the DfE's guidance What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (September 2018).*

**Mental Health:** All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken and they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

#### 15. Preventing Radicalisation

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

**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.

**Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Through our PSHE programme we teach a broad and balanced curriculum which encourages community cohesion, presents balanced presentation of political issues, and provides a safe space in which children/young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas.

Signs of radicalisation: There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with background influences such as family, friends or online, and with particular needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. As a school we Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. This may include making a referral to the Channel programme and possibly to children's social care where the child lives through the Designated Safeguarding Lead with whom they should discuss their concerns. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Risk assessment: The school has assessed the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.

Working in partnership: The Designated Safeguarding Lead will continue existing partnership arrangements and keep open lines of communication with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and safeguarding partners.

Staff training: The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated staff have undertaken Prevent awareness training and are able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation. All staff have been made aware of the Prevent Duty through online training.

IT: Suitable filtering is reviewed to keep pupils safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

Procedures: **If a member of staff is concerned that a pupil may be exposed to radicalisation** the normal referral processes apply, that is they should discuss it with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will follow the safeguarding procedures outlined in this policy and may also make a referral to the Channel programme. Borderline cases will be discussed with the Channel Panel on a no-names basis.

## **16. Allegations Against Staff**

The School has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (including the Headteacher, supply staff, volunteers and Governors) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff (including supply staff), Governors and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures (which are set out fully in Appendix 2) follow part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and works in accordance with the SET procedures section 7 (LSCB, May 2019) and will be used where the member of staff (including supply staff), Governor or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has significantly harmed a child, or may have significantly harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of significant harm to children.

Staff guidance: Guidance is given to staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of significant harm or of allegations of significant harm to a pupil. Where pupils may display very challenging behaviour the school will assess and develop an Individual Support Plan with advice from the SENCO to minimise the risk of needing to use reasonable force. Staff should also be particularly careful in situations where they are alone with pupils providing one-to-one tuition. This guidance is conveyed at safeguarding training for staff and a Staff Code of Conduct document is issued to staff.

Any concern about a member of staff should be raised with the Headteacher immediately regardless of how unlikely it seems that there would be any substance to the concern. No further action may be necessary but it is important that the information is brought to the attention of the Headteacher in the first instance.

*Further guidance is given in Appendix 2.*

### **17. Allegations Against Pupils (peer on peer/child on child abuse)**

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer/child on child abuse, children can abuse other children and it is important to recognise the gendered nature of peer on peer/child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos, upskirting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. Abuse can occur online and through social media, and may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

It is important to recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and gender or through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. All staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and always have a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment as it is never acceptable.

**St Philomena's School will not tolerate any form of abuse.**

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys". This can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, 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.
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Recognising the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse, and understanding that all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and must be taken seriously;

The school does not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We recognise that we have a responsibility to minimise the risk and we raise awareness about peer on peer/child on child abuse through assemblies and PSHE lessons to help children understand, in an

age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in that way towards them.

Staff are trained in how to manage and report incidents of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment. Where an allegation of abuse against one or more pupils has been made or where a member of staff, Governor or volunteer is concerned about peer on peer/child on child abuse, the child protection procedures set out in this policy should be followed and the Designated Safeguarding Lead informed. When responding to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe, the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed is especially important. The pupil(s) accused of abuse and the victim of abuse will both be supported and treated as at risk and a referral will be made to children's social care in respect of either child if that child is suffering or is at risk of significant harm.

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour will apply. The School will take advice from the Children and Families Hub on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse.

If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the Children and Families Hub, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult. In the case of pupils whose parents are abroad, the pupil's guardian will be requested to provide support to the pupil.

Support for those involved in peer on peer/child on child abuse (both the victim and the perpetrator) will be offered support through the school pastoral team, with regular monitoring by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Our pupils know they are valued and our school will support both parties involved. If children's social care have been involved then support may be provided through the Early Help process or wider safeguarding partners. In the immediate event of a disclosure the accused and the victim will be kept apart and be supported by a member of staff. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school or college will be especially important when considering any immediate actions. The school will consider the proportionality of the response and support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis.

Informing parents: Parents will normally be kept informed as appropriate of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the Designated Safeguarding Lead will need to consult the LADO and/or children's social care, the police and/or the Headteacher before discussing details with parents.

## **18. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

We recognise that we have clear powers to share, hold and use information for the purpose of identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect and promoting children's welfare.

When considering what information to share, the protection of the child must always be the most important consideration, where as practitioners we need to share special category personal data, the Data Protection Act 2018 includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

Pupil child protection records: The School will keep all child protection records confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The School will co-operate with police and social services to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of child protection investigations under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and in accordance with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018).

Passing on safeguarding records when a child leaves the school: The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that if a pupil who is subject to a child protection plan moves to another school, their child protection file will be transferred securely (and sent separately from the main pupil file) to a designated contact at the new school and confirmation of safe receipt obtained. The school will follow the guidelines for the deletion of pupil records once the pupil has transferred schools.

Allegations against staff: Where allegations have been made against staff, the School will consult with the LADO and, where appropriate, the police and social services to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom.

## **19. Other Safeguarding Arrangements**

Beyond the child protection procedures outlined in this policy, the School has put in place arrangements to safeguard pupils and to promote their welfare. These include the following:

**Mobile technology:** Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones or technology in school. Pupils who bring mobile phones and technology to school are required to hand the devices into the school office on arrival.

**Private fostering:** The School takes seriously its responsibility to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement.

**Safeguarding on educational visits:** The School will undertake the necessary safeguarding checks in accordance with guidance given in the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) as outlined in the. This guidance includes requesting a written statement from the provider that they have completed vetting and barring checks on all their staff. The School reserves the right to exclude a pupil from a visit on medical/mental health and wellbeing grounds.

**The use of mobile phones and cameras in the EYFS:** Teaching and support staff (except those working in Reception) are permitted to keep phones on their person, and available for use. Reception staff are required to keep their mobile phones in a locked drawer whilst working in Reception.

**Listening to pupils:** The School provides a range of opportunities for pupils to be listened to. Class groups throughout the School are small and there is regular contact time between class teachers and pupils during registration periods.

**Medical Staff:** The school has appointed a Lead First Aider who works full time during term time. Pupils may self-refer to her.

**Children missing from education:** A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage.

Our school recognises that early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Our school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. Parents must ensure the school has two emergency contacts for their children. Regular attendance reviews take place and it may require meetings between parents and the school to establish support for those with poor attendance.

**Risk assessment:** The School recognises that the evaluation of risks and putting in place steps to mitigate against these risks contributes to promoting the welfare and protection of pupils. For hazardous activities and curricular and extra-curricular activities that may pose specific risks, risk assessments are carried out in

accordance with the School's Health and Safety policy and reviewed as required by the Building Committee. Risk assessments for school trips and visits are reviewed by the Educational Visits Coordinator. Pupils who are at risk of significant harm are either referred to external agencies in accordance with these procedures and/or if the pupil is at risk of harm from themselves, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the risk and may put in place an Individual Care Plan (ICP) that may be shared with relevant teachers.

**Visitors:** The School has a Visitors Policy that outlines procedures for managing visitors on site. All visitors must sign in on arrival and sign out on departure and are escorted whilst on School premises by a member of staff or appropriately vetted volunteer. All visitors are given a name badge with the title 'Visitor' which must be clearly displayed and worn at all times whilst on the School premises.

**School premises:** The School takes all practicable steps to ensure that School premises are as secure as circumstances permit.

## **20. Related Policies**

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this Safeguarding Policy:

- Anti Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy including Children Missing from Education
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Digital Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Staff Induction Policy
- Missing Pupil Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children
- Visiting Speaker Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

## **21. Monitoring and Review**

Any child protection incidents at the school will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the school (which will include a review of this policy) to determine whether any improvements can be made to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the LADO will assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the school's procedures. This will include a review of the school's co-operation and communication with local agencies.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor the operation of this policy and its procedures.

The Governors will undertake an annual review of this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures. The Governor conducting the annual review on behalf of the Board will meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other senior staff and take into account any issues raised as a result of any review within the school. The outcome of the review is reported to the Board annually. As part of their review, Governors will monitor how efficiently duties have been discharged and will make recommendations for any changes to policy and procedures necessary.

The Governors will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding arrangements at any time are remedied without delay.

*This policy complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 and DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and Working together to safeguard children (July 2018).*

## APPENDIX 1: REPORTING FORM

This form comprises part of the School's safeguarding suite of documents and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, which is available on the School's website, and in hard copy in the main school staff room and the school office.

This form is designed to be completed by any member of staff who receives information raising child protection concerns either through observation or direct disclosure, from a pupil or from another source. The purpose of this form is to ensure that an adequate amount of information is recorded at the outset. This form must be completed as soon as possible after the information is received even where this happens away from the School, for example on an educational visit.

Do not allow the completion of the form to delay notification of the concerns to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead but pass the completed form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Chair of Governors as appropriate, as a matter of urgency.

The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection is Mrs Philippa Mathews.

The LADO for Essex is Jacquie Wilkes. The contact number to be used is 01245 436 635. Secure email: Jacquie.wilkes@essex.gov.uk.cjism.net.

If for any reason you are not able to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated staff, you should speak to your line manager. **If you are not able to follow this referral procedure and there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child you should contact Children & Families Hub on 0345 603 7627.** If there is an immediate emergency, dial 999 and report the matter to the police.

When completing the reporting form remember:

- Ask 'open' questions and not leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer.
- Listen carefully and keep an open mind.
- Do not take a decision as to whether or not the alleged abuse or neglect has taken place.
- **Do not promise confidentiality.**

### Data Protection Information Notes

The School holds personal information about pupils in order to safeguard and promote their welfare, promote the objects and interests of the School, facilitate the efficient operation of the School and ensure compliance with all relevant legal obligations.

The content of this form, when completed, will contain personal information which is subject to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. Pupils, and in certain circumstances their parents, have the right to request access to personal information about them held by the School, including the content of this form, although exemptions may apply depending on the circumstances. Legal advice should be sought before any information of this nature is disclosed to pupils or parents.

The School will keep this record confidential, allowing disclosure only to those who need the information in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. For example, where, in the professional opinion of the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it is deemed necessary we may share this information with the social services or the police for the purpose of child protection investigations.



# Safeguarding Form

Please complete and pass to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Pupil Name:	Date:	Incident Form Number:
Form/Teacher	Time:	

Detail: (Use and attach body map if applicable)

*Continue overleaf if necessary*

Action Taken  
*(for example, referred to Children and Families Hub or Police - include date and time and who was informed):*

Reporting staff name	Reporting staff signature	Date
Safeguarding Officer name	Safeguarding Officer signature	Date
Headteacher signature		Date

**Safeguarding Form completed** (tear off slip for Pupil File)

Pupil's name \_\_\_\_\_

Form \_\_\_\_\_

Reported by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Incident No \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2: ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

The School has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff, the Headteacher, Governors and volunteers who work with children that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures will be used where the member of staff or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

### **Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold: Low Level Concerns**

To promote an open and transparent culture as part of the whole school approach to safeguarding, all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of St Philomena's School are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

A low level concern is a concern, no matter how small, that causes a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' and staff should report it to the DSL or a DDSL in their absence. A low level concern occurs when an adult working in, or on behalf of, the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. A low level concern does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

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

- Being over friendly with children.
- 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.
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Reporting a low level concern enables action to be taken promptly to minimise the risk of abuse. This ensures that staff are clear about, and act within, professional boundaries and in accordance with the ethos and values of St Philomena's School.

Further information on how to record and deal with low level concerns can be found in Part 4 of KCSIE 2021.

**Allegations against staff:** Where an allegation or complaint is made against any member of staff, Governor, volunteer, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the matter should be reported immediately to the Headteacher. Where appropriate, the Headteacher will consult with the Deputy Designated staff and all allegations will be discussed with the LADO before further action is taken. The LADO will be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to the school's attention and appear to meet the criteria or are made directly to the police. All discussions with the LADO should be recorded in writing.

**Allegations against the Headteacher, Chair of Governors or other Governor:** Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of Governors, or in her absence the Deputy Chair, without first notifying the Headteacher. The Chair of Governors, or in her absence the Deputy Chair, will liaise with the LADO and relevant agencies as required. If an allegation is made against the Chair of Governors or another Governor, the allegation should be reported to the Headteacher. In either case, any such allegations will be discussed with the LADO within one working day before further action is taken. The LADO will guide the school through the subsequent procedures.

**Disclosure of information:** The Headteacher will inform the accused person of the allegation as soon as possible after the LADO has been consulted. The parents or carers of the child[ren] involved will be

informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. Where the LADO advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or the police or the local authority's social care services need to be involved, the Headteacher should not inform the accused or the parents or carers until these agencies have been consulted and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed. The parents or carers should be kept informed of the progress of the case, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. This information will be given in confidence and the School will consider its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018.

**Confidentiality:** Section 13 of the Education Act 2011 prohibits the publication of any material to the public at large or any section of the public that may lead to the identification of a teacher accused of committing a criminal offence against a pupil at the school until such time as the accused person is charged with an offence. In all such cases the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality in order to comply with these restrictions and will seek advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services as appropriate and parents will be informed of the requirement to maintain confidentiality.

**Support:** A school has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless external agencies object to this. A representative will be appointed to keep him or her informed of the progress of the case and to consider what other support is available for the individual, as appropriate.

**Action to be taken against the accused:** Where an investigation by the police or the local authority children's social care services is unnecessary, the LADO will discuss the steps to be taken with the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors where the allegation is against the Headteacher). The appropriate action will depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and will range from taking no further action to summary dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in the future. If after the sharing of initial information, there is no further action to be taken, the LADO and the person in School managing the case should record the justification and consideration will then be given to what should be communicated to the staff member concerned and the person who made the initial allegation.

It may be necessary to undertake a further investigation to determine the appropriate action. If so, the LADO will discuss with the Headteacher how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The appropriate person will usually be a senior member of staff, but in some instances it may be appropriate to appoint an independent investigator as advised by the Essex Safeguarding Children Board.

**Suspension:** Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation and should only be considered in a case where:

- There is cause to suspect a child or other children at the School is or are at risk of significant harm; or
- The allegation warrants investigation by the police; or
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

If immediate suspension is considered, the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors) will always consider whether the result that would be achieved by immediate suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements. The case will also be discussed with the LADO who will gather the views of children's social care and the police. The professional reputational damage that can arise from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated or malicious must be considered. It may be that the result that would be achieved by suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements, for example, redeployment. In any event, the School will consider suspension on a case by case basis and after evaluating the risks.

If suspension is considered to be necessary, the rationale and justification will be recorded and the member of staff being suspended will be informed in writing within one working day. At the point of suspension, the member of staff will also be informed of who their point of contact within the school will be during the period of suspension and how they will be kept informed.

In cases where the School is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual at the School, it will be necessary to immediately suspend that person from teaching pending the findings of the Department for Education and Teaching Regulation Agency investigation.

Outcome of allegation investigations: In accordance with statutory guidance from the Department for Education, the following definitions will be used when determining the outcome of investigations:

- Substantiated: There is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation.  
False: There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.  
Malicious: There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.  
Unsubstantiated: This is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

Criminal proceedings: The School will consult with the LADO following the conclusion of a criminal investigation or prosecution as to whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and if so, how to proceed. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case, including the result of the police investigation or trial and the standards of proof applicable.

Return to work: If it is decided that the person who has been suspended should return to work, the School should consider how to facilitate this, for example, a phased return may be appropriate and / or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance in the short term. The School should also consider how to manage the contact with the child[ren] who made the allegation.

Ceasing to use a person's services: If the School ceases to use the services of a member of staff or a person that had been engaged to work at the school (including temporary staff and those on fixed term contracts, staff employed via a contractor, or a Governor or volunteer) because they are unsuitable to work with children, a compromise agreement will not be used and there will be a prompt and detailed report to the Disclosure and Barring Service within one month of the person leaving the school. Separate consideration will be given to whether a referral should be made to the Department for Education and Teaching Regulation Agency in cases of professional misconduct involving teaching staff. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay.

Resignation: If a member of staff, including the Headteacher (or a governor or volunteer) tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide his or her services, any child protection allegations will still be followed up by the School. Resignation or ceasing to provide services will not prevent contact being made with the LADO or a prompt and detailed report being made to the Disclosure and Barring Service in appropriate circumstances.

Timescales: All allegations must be dealt with as a priority so as to avoid any delay. Where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious, the case should be resolved within one week. It is generally expected that 80% of cases of allegations of abuse against staff will be resolved within one month, 90% within three months, and all but exceptional cases being completed within 12 months. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headteacher should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, it should be held within 15 working days.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations: If an allegation by a pupil is determined to be unsubstantiated or malicious, the LADO will refer the child to children's social care services to determine whether the child is in need of support. Where an allegation by a pupil is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Headteacher will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Behaviour policy.

Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation, the Headteacher will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the school on the basis that they have treated the school or a member of staff unreasonably.

Whether or not the person making the allegation is a pupil or a parent (or other member of the public), the school reserves the right to contact the police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

Record keeping: Details of an allegation including how the allegation was followed up and resolved and a record of any action taken and decision reached will be recorded on the employee's file and retained at least until the employee reaches the normal retirement age or for a period of ten years from the date of the allegation, if this is longer. A copy will be provided to the person concerned. If the allegation was found to have been malicious all details will be removed from the employee's records.

References: Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should also not be included in any reference.

### **APPENDIX 3: FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE TYPES AND SIGNS OF ABUSE**

*All schools should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.*

**Types of abuse and neglect** (as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021)

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

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

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

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

**Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children:** sexual violence or sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence includes rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted contact of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. Harmful sexual behaviour is defined as problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.

**Child criminal exploitation:** 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.

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 staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too.

**Child sexual exploitation:** is a form of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

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.

The risk of child sexual exploitation is addressed as part of the PSHEE programme of work on sexuality and sexual development, choice and consent, healthy relationships, harmful social norms and abusive behaviours and online safety.

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will lead on these issues and work with other agencies and safeguarding partners as appropriate.

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

**Grooming:** grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

## **Signs of abuse**

The information given here are not meant to be exhaustive and staff should not jump to conclusions because of the presence of just one of the factors below. Every case is different.

<b>Physical abuse</b>	
<p>The physical signs of abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body or injuries which the child can't explain.</li><li>• Multiple bruises - often on the upper arm or outside the thigh.</li><li>• Cigarette burns.</li><li>• Human bite marks.</li><li>• Broken bones.</li><li>• Scalds especially those with upward.</li><li>• Splash marks suggesting that hot water has been thrown over the child.</li><li>• Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.</li></ul>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fear of parents being contacted for an explanation.</li><li>• Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.</li><li>• Flinching when approached or touched.</li><li>• Reluctance to get changed, even, for example, in hot weather or for sporting events.</li><li>• Withdrawn behaviour.</li><li>• Running away from home.</li></ul>
<b>Emotional abuse</b>	
<p>The physical signs of abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age.</li><li>• Struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts.</li><li>• Seem isolated from their parents.</li><li>• Lack social skills or have few, if any, friends.</li></ul>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can indicate emotional abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Neurotic behaviour eg sulking, rocking.</li><li>• Being unable to play.</li><li>• Fear of making mistakes.</li><li>• Sudden speech disorders.</li><li>• Self-harm.</li><li>• Fear of parent being approached regarding behaviour.</li><li>• Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.</li><li>• Extremist views.</li></ul>
<b>Sexual abuse</b>	
<p>The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain or itching in the genital area.</li><li>• Bruising or bleeding near genital area.</li><li>• Sexually transmitted disease.</li><li>• Vaginal discharge or infection.</li><li>• Stomach pains.</li><li>• Discomfort when walking or sitting down.</li><li>• Pregnancy.</li></ul>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate sexual abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, eg becoming aggressive or withdrawn.</li><li>• Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.</li><li>• Having nightmares.</li><li>• Running away from home.</li><li>• Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level.</li><li>• Sexual drawings or language.</li><li>• Bedwetting.</li><li>• Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.</li><li>• Self-harm.</li><li>• Saying they have secrets which can't be told to anyone.</li><li>• Not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence).</li><li>• Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.</li></ul>

<b>Neglect</b>	
<p>The physical signs of neglect may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others.</li> <li>• Constantly dirty or 'smelly'.</li> <li>• Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight.</li> <li>• Inappropriate clothing for the weather conditions.</li> </ul>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate neglect may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaining of being tired all the time.</li> <li>• Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.</li> <li>• Having few friends.</li> <li>• Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.</li> </ul>
<b>Domestic Abuse</b>	
<p>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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.</p> <p>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. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate Domestic Abuse is taking place may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become aggressive</li> <li>• Display anti social behaviour</li> <li>• Suffer from depression or anxiety</li> <li>• Not do so well at school – due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.</li> </ul>
<b>Peer on peer/child on child abuse</b>	
<p>Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.</p> <p>Peer on peer/child on child abuse can include two specific forms, known as Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment. <b>Sexual Violence</b> includes sexual offences which fall under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. <b>Sexual Harassment</b> refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'. This can occur online (including, but not limited to non-consensual sharing of images, making sexual comments on social media) and offline (including but not limited to making sexual comments, sexual taunting or 'jokes', and physical contact, for example, brushing against someone deliberately or interfering with their clothes).</p>	<p>Signs can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard you would ordinarily expect.</li> <li>• Physical injuries.</li> <li>• Having difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing.</li> <li>• Becoming withdrawn, shy, experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety, panic attacks, suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much.</li> <li>• Drugs and/or alcohol use.</li> <li>• Changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age.</li> </ul>

<b>County Lines and Gangs</b>	
<p>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”.</p> <p>Children and vulnerable adults are 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 be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.</p> <p>Gangs also use local property as a base; these often belong to a vulnerable adult and are obtained through force or coercion (known as ‘cuckooing’).</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour that indicate children are at threat from criminal exploitation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.</li> <li>• Being secretive about who they are with and who they are talking to.</li> <li>• Possessing items (such as electronic devices or phones) that parents have not provided.</li> <li>• Going to unusual places to meet friends.</li> <li>• Having access to drugs and alcohol.</li> </ul>
<b>Child sexual exploitation</b>	
<p>The physical signs of child sexual exploitation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends</li> <li>• they could appear frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them</li> <li>• they might be promiscuous</li> <li>• sexually transmitted infection (STI) or pregnancy</li> </ul>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate child sexual exploitation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained gifts or new possessions.</li> <li>• Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.</li> <li>• Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.</li> <li>• Changes in emotional well-being.</li> <li>• Misuse of drugs and alcohol.</li> <li>• Missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.</li> <li>• Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education.</li> </ul>

<b>Criminal Exploitation</b>	
<p>CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.</p> <p>CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see below for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour that indicate children are at threat from criminal exploitation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.</li> <li>• Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.</li> <li>• Changes in emotional well-being.</li> <li>• Misuse of drugs and alcohol;</li> <li>• Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.</li> <li>• Regularly missing school or education or do not take part in education.</li> </ul>
<b>Serious Violence</b>	
<p>Indicators which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased absence from school.</li> <li>• A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.</li> <li>• A significant decline in performance.</li> <li>• Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.</li> <li>• Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.</li> <li>• Unexplained gifts or new possessions 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</li> </ul>	<p>Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being male.</li> <li>• Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.</li> <li>• Having experienced child maltreatment.</li> <li>• Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.</li> </ul>

<b>Grooming</b>	
<p>Children may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have sexual health issues.</li> <li>• Present as suicidal, self/harming, feeling depressed, unworthy.</li> </ul> <p>In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate grooming may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wanting to spend more and more time online.</li> <li>• Being secretive about who they are talking to online and what sites they visit.</li> <li>• Possessing items (such as electronic devices or phones) that parents have not provided.</li> <li>• Being emotionally volatile.</li> <li>• Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.</li> <li>• Going to unusual places to meet friends.</li> <li>• Having access to drugs and alcohol.</li> <li>• Go missing from home or school.</li> </ul>
<b>Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse</b>	
<p>Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. FM is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage.</p> <p>HBA includes all incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the community and/or the family, and commonly involve practices such as FGM, forced marriage and/or breast ironing. Abuse often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and therefore it is important to be aware of this dynamic and consider risk factors when deciding on any action. If staff have a concern that a child may be at risk of honour based abuse, they should alert their DSL immediately.</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate Forced marriage is due to take place may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of physical abuse</li> <li>• Stressed emotional state</li> <li>• Leave the family home</li> <li>• Lack of trust in peers and adults</li> </ul> <p>The “One-Chance” Rule All practitioners working with victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence need to be aware of the “one chance” rule. That is, they may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus they may only have one chance to save a life.</p>
<b>Female Genital Mutilation</b>	
<p>The physical signs of FGM may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty walking, sitting or standing.</li> <li>• Severe pain.</li> <li>• Bleeding.</li> <li>• Shock.</li> <li>• Inability to urinate.</li> <li>• Infections such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C.</li> </ul>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate FGM may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spending longer than normal in the bathroom.</li> <li>• Unusual behaviour after an absence from school.</li> <li>• Particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.</li> <li>• Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.</li> </ul>
<b>Breast Ironing</b>	
<p>Breast ironing, also known as breast flattening, is the pounding and massaging of a pubescent girl's breasts, using hard or heated objects, to try to make them stop developing or disappear. It is typically carried out by the girl's mother, who will say she is trying to protect the girl from sexual harassment and rape to prevent early pregnancy that would tarnish the family name, or to allow the girl to pursue education, rather than be forced into early marriage.</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour that can also indicate Breast ironing may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusual behaviour after an absence from school.</li> <li>• Particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.</li> <li>• Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.</li> </ul>

#### **APPENDIX 4: SIGNPOSTING TO FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues are available on the NSPCC website [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk).

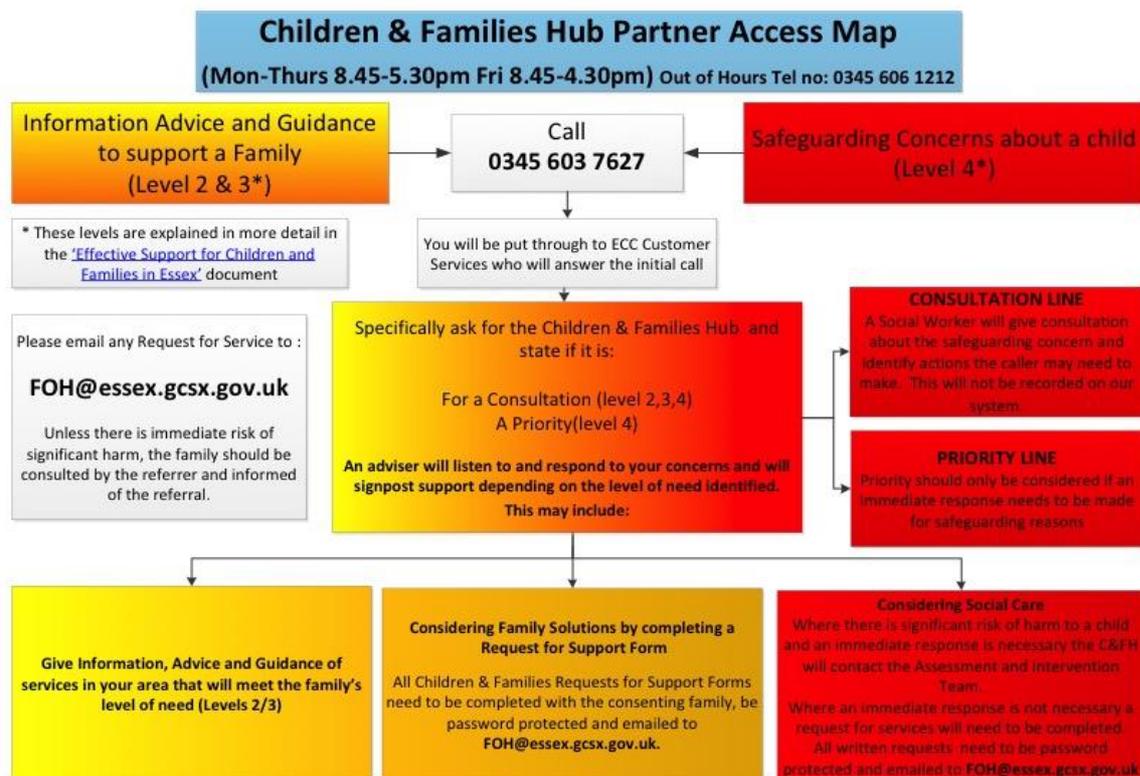
Guidance and advice is also available in the DfE's [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (March 2015). The guiding principles are:

1. No matter where you work, you are likely to encounter children during the course of your normal working activities. You are in a unique position to be able to observe signs of abuse or neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate a child may be being abused or neglected.
2. You should make sure that you are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, that you question the behaviour of children and parents/carers and don't necessarily take what you are told at face value. You should make sure you know where to turn to if you need to ask for help, and that you refer to children's social care or to the police, if you suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is immediate danger (see below information re Children and Families Hub for further information).
3. You should make sure that you understand and work within the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that are in place in your area. In doing so, you should be guided by the following key principles:
  - Children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.
  - Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.
  - It is better to help children as early as possible, before issues escalate and become more damaging.
  - Children and families are best supported and protected when there is a coordinated response from all relevant agencies.
4. You should not let other considerations, like the fear of damaging relationships with adults, get in the way of protecting children from abuse and neglect. If you think that referral to children's social care is necessary, you should view it as the beginning of a process of inquiry, not as an accusation.

**Annex B of KCSIE 2021** contains guidance on the following issues:

- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation: county lines
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- So-called 'honour-based' violence
- Preventing radicalisation
- Peer on peer/child on child abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Upskirting

## APPENDIX 5: CONTACT DETAILS



### Contact details (Mon-Thurs 8.45-5.30pm Fri 8.45-4.30pm)

When you telephone **0345 603 7627** - please specifically ask for the Children and Families Hub and state if it is for the:

- Consultation Line (Social Worker will give advice but not record the call)
- Children and Families Hub
- The Priority Line (because an immediate response is necessary)

By telephoning **0345 603 7627** and asking specifically for the Children and Families Hub, you will speak to a Family Adviser who will discuss with you and help identify the right services that will help to meet the family's needs.

Enquiries and requests for information from Children and Families can also be made through an online portal: [www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk](http://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk). Using this online portal will assist those partners who do not have access to secure email accounts.

### Contact details: Out of hours

Friday and bank holidays 4.30pm – 9am  
Telephone: 0345 606 1212

**For concerns regarding immediate risk** contact the Essex Safeguarding Children Board on 03330 135371

**If there is an immediate risk of harm to a child then contact the Police on 999,  
or from within school 9 followed by 999.**

**APPENDIX 6: KEY SAFEGUARDING FACTS**

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils is our number one priority

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility	We operate within a culture of openness and recognise and accept that abuse can happen in any organisation	We are a 'sharing organisation'  All concerns should be reported
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All concerns about a child (including signs of abuse and neglect) must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

In the event that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately

An allegation about another adult in school should be referred to the Headteacher	An allegation about the Headteacher should be referred to the Chair of Governors	Any concern or 'nagging doubt' about an adult or child should be shared with the DSL or Headteacher
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This policy must be read alongside 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021' – DfE Statutory Guidance