



Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy (Including EYFS)

Policy Review Date: September 2025

Reviewed By: J Callaway, SLT & Board of Governors

Next Review: September 2026 (or following incident, legislation or interim guidance)

September 2025 Reviewed & ratified by:

Headteacher: Mrs J Callaway

Chair of Governors: Dr Catherine Kidd :

This policy is available on the school website and up on request.

Further Updates and Amendments to Policy

Date	Section Heading	Update Details
September 2023		<p>Updated with the latest Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance based on KCSIE 2023</p> <p>All Updates as a result of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023</p>
April 2024		<p>Updated from the latest Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance</p> <p>December 2023 Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated)</p>
September 2024		<p>Updated with the latest Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance based on KCSIE 2024</p>
September 2025		<p>Updated with the latest Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance and updates from KCSIE 2025</p>

KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

KEY SCHOOL CONTACTS		
Role:	Name/ Details:	Contact:
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Joanna Callaway Headteacher	0151 625 6993 jcallaway@avalon-school.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Martin Ashton Deputy Headteacher	0151 625 6993 martinashton@avalon-school.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (EYFS)	Mrs Alison Prandle Nursery Manager	0151 625 6993 aprandle@avalon-school.co.uk
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding / Child Protection	Dr Catherine Kidd Chair of Governors	0151 625 6993 schooloffice@avalon-school.co.uk
Chair of Governors	Dr Catherine Kidd	0151 625 6993 schooloffice@avalon-school.co.uk
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Mrs Joanna Callaway Headteacher	0151 625 6993 jcallaway@avalon-school.co.uk
KEY EXTERNAL CONTACTS		
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Kevin Dykes	0151 666 5525 safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk kerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk
Head of Service Quality & Safeguarding Children	Lynn Campbell	0151 666 4442
Delegated Safeguarding Partner for Education	Nicola Griffiths	Nilcolagriffiths2@wirral.gov.uk
Prevent Single Point of Contact	Andrea Bignall	Andrea.Mears@merseyside.police.uk
Prevent Team Merseyside Police	Prevent Team	0151 777 8506
Director of Children's Services	Elizabeth Hartley	0151 606 2000
Integrated Front Door	Mon-Fri, 9am – 5pm Outside of these hours	Tel: 0151 606 2008 ifd@wirral.gov.uk Tel: 0151 677 6557

Police	In an emergency For non-emergency but possible crime	999 101
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line		ADDRESS: Weston House 42 Curtain Road London EC2A 3NH TEL: 0800 028 0285 EMAIL: help@nspcc.org.uk
Disclosure and Barring Service		ADDRESS: DBS customer services PO Box 3961 Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 4HF TEL: 03000 200 190 EMAIL: customerservices@db.gov.uk
Teaching Regulation Agency		ADDRESS: Teacher Misconduct Ground Floor South Cheylesmore House 5 Quinton Road Coventry CV1 2WT TEL: 0207 593 5393 EMAIL: misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk
OFSTED Safeguarding Children		TEL: 0300 123 4666 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm) EMAIL: Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
Independent Schools Inspectorate		TEL: 0207 6000100 EMAIL: concerns@isi.net

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<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/section-11-175-audit/>

100 Days of Safeguarding - <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/100-days-of-safeguarding/>

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Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy:

INTRODUCTION:

This policy is applicable to the whole school community (including those pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)). This policy is made available to parents and the public on the school's website and on request.

At Avalon School we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment and always act in the best interests of the child. Our business is to know everyone as an individual and to provide a secure and caring environment so that each pupil can learn in safety.

- 1.1. It is essential that **everybody** working in Avalon school understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. Our school is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance. All staff should make sure that any decisions made are **in the best interests of the child**.
- 1.2. Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern. The governing body will ensure that our school will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and work together with agencies to ensure that our school has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or where significant harm is suggested. (<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/1-2-recognition-significant-harm/>)
- 1.3. Our school is a community and all those directly connected, staff members, governors, parents, families and pupils, have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure for all.

This policy provides the basis for our procedures and good practice within the school for Safeguarding work. It should be read in conjunction with the Wirral Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/>), plus the safeguarding appendices documents. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the partnership considers to be safe and professional practice in this context.

2 OUR ETHOS:

- 2.1 We believe that Avalon school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, spiritual and moral development of the individual child; enabling all children to thrive.
- 2.2 We recognise the importance of providing an environment within our school that will help children feel safe and respected. We recognise the importance of enabling

children to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to. We recognise that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children

- 2.3 We recognise that all adults within the school, including permanent, supply staff, temporary staff, volunteers, parents and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.
- 2.4 We will work pro-actively with parents to build a solid understanding of the school's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1 In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years but in the case of SEN it is up to 25 years of age.
- 3.2 This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.
- 3.3 This policy applies to all learners in this school, including in the EYFS.

4 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions (including sixth-form colleges) to make the necessary arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. Section 157 of the same Act places a similar duty on non-maintained and independent schools, including free schools and academies.
- 4.2 Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, independent schools, including free schools and academies, are required to co-operate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.
- 4.3 Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the Local Safeguarding Children Board can require a school or further education institution to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.
- 4.4 This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, Dec 2023: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025* [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education)

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance, [Disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006](#) (September 2018)
- KCSIE also refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: [What-to-do-if-you're-worried-a-child-is-being-abused \(March 2015\)](#)
- KCSIE refers also to [When to call the police , non-statutory guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council](#)
- *Working Together* refers to the non-statutory but important advice: [Information Sharing April 2024](#)
- [Prevent-duty-guidance: for England and Wales](#) (July 2015 updated 2021) (*Prevent*). *Prevent* is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:
- [Protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty](#) (June 2015)
- [The-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation](#) (July 2015)

All local procedures can be found on the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership website:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/>

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 Our governing body recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation, and this policy has regard to statutory guidance; [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2024), [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#)), Key statutory and non-statutory guidance and any locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- 5.2 The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall designated responsibility for safeguarding is **Mrs Joanna Callaway** (also Headteacher) We have deputy designated safeguarding leads, **Mr Martin Ashton, and Mrs Alison Prandle** (EYFS) to ensure there is always appropriate cover for this role
The responsibilities of all Designated Safeguarding Leads are described in detail in Appendix A.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is part of our school's leadership team and their role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (and the deputies) will be **explicit in their job description**. This person should have the appropriate authority and be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and Safeguarding matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
- 5.3 The school has a **nominated governor** (Dr C Kidd) responsible for safeguarding to champion good practice, to liaise with the head teacher and to provide information and reports to the governing body.
- 5.4 The **case manager for dealing with allegations** of abuse made against school staff members is the head teacher. The case manager for dealing with allegations against

the head teacher is the chair of governors (Dr C. Kidd). **The procedure for managing allegations is detailed in Appendix C.**

- 5.5 The **head teacher** will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff and other adults are clear about procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child, including if children go [missing from education](#), including children who are 'absent' from education, or those unexplainable and or/persistent absences, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods.
- 5.6 The **governing body** is collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day practice.
- 5.7 **All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers** know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to pupils who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child. They are aware that behaviours and physical signs linked to behaviours that put children in danger. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This may include, but not be limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual harassment, sexual violence and assaults, harmful sexual behaviour and sexting. Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers ([7-minute-briefing-Child-or-child.pdf](#))
- 5.8 Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools, colleges and educational settings is now part of [KCSIE 2025](#).
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>.
Assessment support can be found via Shorespace - <https://shorespace.org.uk/>
- It should be recognised that these issues are likely to occur, and so schools should have procedures in place to deal with them. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, [questioning their gender](#)' +(LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND. We recognise that these children can be targeted by other children, so it is vital that school provides a safe space for these children to speak out and share their concerns with members of staff. Pupils are protected from upskirting, bullying (+ cyber), homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism, and all other forms of discrimination.
[More guidance in KCSIE2025](#)
- Staff have familiarity with the [Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED), the Human Rights Act 1998 and recent reforms to the Act and how they apply to safeguarding

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bill-of-rights-bill-documents>

Our school acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents.

Online Risk and Harms:

Our school is committed to responding to evolving digital risks, supporting the changes to the [online safety act](#) (2023), which protects children and adults online and puts a range of new duties on social media companies and search services, giving them legal duties to protect their users from illegal content and content harmful to children. More information on the changes can be accessed [here](#).

We also acknowledge that generative artificial intelligence (AI) presents exciting opportunities to improve lives and will continue to explore this technology safely to encourage innovation and maximise the benefits for education. The full guidance can be accessed here: [Generative AI guidance](#)

The appropriate **designated safeguarding lead** should be familiar with the full guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (**updated Mar 2024**)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

The school will look to identify how to meet the digital and technology standards, using self-assessments that can be accessed [here](#).

Adult involvement in youth-produced sexual imagery

The school's full response to youth-produced sexual imagery (YPSI) is outlined in the Digital Safety Policy.

Sexually motivated incidents

The school will remain aware that not all instances of YPSI will be between children and young people, and in some cases may involve adults posing as a child for the purpose of obtaining nude and semi-nude images from persons under 18.

Staff will be aware of the signs that an adult is involved in the sharing the nude or semi-nude images. These include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing unsolicited sexual images.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Being coerced or pressured into doing sexual things, including producing sexual imagery.

- Being offered money or gifts.
- Being threatened or blackmailed into sharing nude or semi-nude images, and/or further sexual activity.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated incidents of YPSI involving adults may also be called “**sextortion**”, where the offender threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they do something to prevent it, e.g. paying money. In these cases, offenders often pose as children and:

- Groom or coerce the victim into sending nudes or semi-nudes in order to blackmail them.
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person, e.g. via hacking.
- Use digitally manipulated and/or *AI-generated images of the child or young person.

*(Computer systems and software that are able to perform tasks that ordinarily require human intelligence, such as decision-making and the creation of images).

Staff will be aware of the signs of sextortion, which include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing sexual images first.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Told their online accounts have been hacked in order to obtain images, personal information, and contacts.
- Being blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details.
- Being shown stolen or digitally manipulated/generated images of the victim.

It is important that schools record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own schools and make appropriate plans to reduce it.

The guidance covers: It covers what sexual violence and harassment is, schools’ legal responsibilities, a whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection and how to respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Children may not feel ready to, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn’t stop staff from having a ['professional curiosity'](https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professional-curiosity/) and speaking to the DSL. <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professional-curiosity/>

Incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with the school’s child protection and safeguarding policies. Where there is a safeguarding concern the board of Governors and school leaders will ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

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

A bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance.

If you are concerned about something, you can contact the **NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663** or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

- 5.9 The school has a Digital Safety policy regarding the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g. i-Pads. For online safety, there is within the policy support about children accessing the internet whilst they're at school using data on their phones (3G or 4G networks). The policy reinforces the importance of online safety, including making parents aware of what your school ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)

Digital literacy and **safety** is one of the most paramount issues of our time. For teachers and pupils, learning how to use the online space sensibly and in a protected manner is vital. Project EVOLVE by SWGfL presents a plethora of tools to help staff and pupils, develop a well-rounded educational schemata for inclusion into lessons. <https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/what-is-projectevolve-edu/>

The Board of Governors are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT system and ensure the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The policy for remote learning demonstrates an understanding of how to follow safeguarding procedures when planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely. The school maintains the capability to provide remote education when it is not possible for some or all of their pupils to attend in person. (All IT policies are located on the School Website or can be requested from the School Office) Filtering and monitoring standards are adhered to and the DSL has robust oversight of the arrangements to meet those standards.

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

Artificial Intelligence has the power to transform education by helping teachers focus on what they do best: teaching. This marks a shift in how technology is used to enhance lives and tap into the vast potential of AI in classrooms. We look to consider the risks and challenges alongside the opportunities and benefits continue to work to ensure the safety and reliability of technology, including AI tools, to support teachers and learners. The guidance below support the assessment of risk:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education>

Resources for schools and education settings -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/using-ai-in-education-settings-support-materials>

6 SUPPORTING CHILDREN

6.1 We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence (Domestic Abuse) are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. We also recognise children who witness domestic abuse are victims, that witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on children, and that children can be victims in their own relationships too. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help> They may feel helpless, humiliated and some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives. [What is domestic abuse information](#)

6.2 We accept that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

6.3 Our school will support all pupils by:

- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning; Through PSHE , RHE and other curriculum contexts, pupils are encouraged to talk about feelings and deal assertively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn to for help and advice;
- providing pupils with a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties; and ensuring that pupils are taught about safeguarding so that they ‘recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it’
- Continuing to engage in [Operation Encompass](#), the national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse, and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales. Children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.
- supporting the child’s development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence and encourage the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying; (The anti-bullying policy is located on the school website)
- ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly; plus Relationship and Sexual Health Education (RSHE) requirements (see the school’s RSE policy and PSHCE policy).

- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children; including domestic abuse
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/domestic-abuse-act-statutory-guidance>
- ensuring that the curriculum will help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to and will support young people to become more resilient to inappropriate behaviours towards them, risk taking behaviours and behaviours that children may be coerced into including, sexual harassment, child – on child abuse, ‘sexting’ and the displaying of ‘Harmful Sexualised Behaviour’; <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/resources/key-messages/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>
- Wirral's Harmful Sexualised Behaviour identification toolkit can be found here:
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>

Child-on-child abuse

- For the purposes of this policy, ‘**child-on-child abuse**’ is defined as abuse between children.
- The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse,
- All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online **risk and harm**. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring.
- All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.
- All staff will understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between peers, and will not tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
 - Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
 - Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
 - Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. / Upskirting.
 - Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.
- The DSL will ensure they appropriately assess all instances of child-on-child abuse, including in cases of image-based abuse, to help determine whether the alleged

perpetrator(s) is under the age of 18 or is an adult posing as a child. The DSL will immediately refer the case if it is found that a so-called child-on-child abuse incident involves an adult, e.g. where an adult poses as a child online to groom a child or young person.

- All staff will be clear as to the school's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.
- The school's procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Child-on-child Abuse Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school's Anti-bullying Policy and Exclusion Policy, where relevant.
- Addressing child on child abuse - [Resources for schools and colleges](#)
- [Responding to Child Sexual abuse – https://www.csacentre.org.uk/child-sexual-abuse-response-pathway/](https://www.csacentre.org.uk/child-sexual-abuse-response-pathway/)

- The school will consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment [\(KCSIE 2025\)](#)
- The school has a behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that each pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred; (The behaviour policy is located on the school website)

- The behaviour policy outlines measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

- Clear procedures are in place for addressing and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviours, sexual violence and sexual harassment - these procedures are easily understood and easily accessible. Children who have experienced sexual violence can display a wide range of responses, so the school will remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to their needs

- playing a crucial role in preventative education and preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. There is a culture of zero tolerance to sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy, pastoral support system and a planned programme of RSHE delivered regularly, tackling issues such as: boundaries; consent; body confidence; stereotyping; and sexual harassment

- acknowledging the importance of 'Harm from outside the home' (HOTH), <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/> which considers wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare. ([Working together to safeguard children Dec 2023](#) and [KCSIE September 2025](#)).
-
- liaising with a range of [Early Help](#) agencies that support the pupil such as Health Services, Wirral Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services, Special Educational Support Services, Youth Services

and the Educational Psychology Service.

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

- ensuring that, when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection (**CP**) Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within two weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved;
- alert the authority if it is aware of any child being looked after under a [Private Fostering](#) arrangement. On admission to school, and at other times, the school will be vigilant in identifying any private fostering arrangement.
- acknowledging that a child that is looked after (CLA) or has been previously looked after by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CLA and previously looked after children safe. It is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group;
- applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), by considering the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group;
- recognising that to safeguard a pupil, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, school can reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint. Guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

6.4 Monitoring Attendance

- A child missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including exploitation. Local Authority guidance and procedures will be followed for dealing with a child who is missing from education, or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, particularly on repeated occasions or if a child suddenly stops attending. The school will follow the Missing Child Policy. For those children and families who have chronic poor attendance or persistent absenteeism, school will consider whether educational neglect is present and whether a referral to children's services is required, or whether the school should seek consent to begin an Early Help Assessment in order to coordinate a multi-agency plan of support for the child and family.
- Attendance will be closely monitored. In line with the school's attendance policy, contact will be made for any unexplained absences on the first morning of any absence. Follow up calls will then be made throughout the period of absence. In addition, the attendance of children with known welfare and attendance concerns will be monitored closely, particularly those with chronic poor attendance or persistent absentees, or if a child suddenly stops attending. Schools should also scrutinise the attendance of off-site provision to ensure children are attending and are safe. Similarly, the attendance of children who are vulnerable or with known welfare and safeguarding concerns such as children who have a child protection plan, a child in need, are Children Looked After and/or SEN will be rigorously monitored on a daily and weekly basis. The child's social worker will be informed immediately when there are unexplained absences or attendance concerns.

- It is important that the school's attendance team, including the Local Attendance Officer are aware of any safeguarding concerns. It is critical that when a child is not attending school their welfare is confirmed and expected practice would be for an appropriate professional to visit the home and speak to the child alone, particularly if there are any safeguarding concerns. The timing for this home visit will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The school will seek to ensure it has at least two emergency contacts for each family and consider what urgent action it may need to take when a vulnerable child and family are not contactable and the child has not attended school. Where necessary, this may include reporting the child missing to the police. The school will ensure it is aware, in advance, of any difficulties in accessing the premises of a child's family home.
- It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.
- Children Missing Education (C.M.E.) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. All staff should be aware that children missing education or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Children going missing or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, can also be an indicator of mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. When a child is deemed to be missing from education, or unexplainable and or/persistent absences, school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. Once these enquiries have been undertaken, our school will follow the local protocol for Children Missing Education and make a C.M.E referral to the Local Authority Officer for C.M.E.
- Some parents will decide to remove their child from the school role in order to educate them at home. For the majority of children, this choice will be with the child's best education at the heart of their decision and it will be a positive learning experience. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean that some children become less visible to services who are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their individual needs. Where a parent or carer has expressed their intention to remove their child from the school roll with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with other key professionals and will, where possible, attempt to facilitate a meeting with the family to ensure that all parties have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important for those children who have SEND, are vulnerable, and/or who have a social worker. The school will also link with the named officer for Elective Home Education within the Local Authority. Staff are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.

Alternative provision

- Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, (further information provided in [KCSIE 2025](#)), should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of any alternative providers and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend.
- Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff
- School should regularly review any alternative provision placements to make sure the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. If safeguarding concerns occur, the placement should be immediately reviewed and ended if necessary (further compliance can be found in paragraphs 169 and 170 of [KCSIE 2025](#)).

Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or pupils with certain health conditions:

Pupils with SEND may not outwardly shown signs of abuse and/or may have difficulties in communication about abuse or neglect or bullying.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing this with the DSL as appropriate.

7 SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

7.1 We have developed a structured procedure in line with *Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership* which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse. **This is detailed in Appendix B.**

7.2 In line with the procedures, the Integrated Front Door will be contacted as soon as there is a significant concern (0151 606 2008 / ifd@wirral.gov.uk)

7.3 The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be clearly advertised in the school **and on the website**, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

7.4 We will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by publishing the policy and

procedures on our website and by referring to them in our introductory school materials and safeguarding information booklet.

- 7.5 We will use the NSPCC- [When to call the police](#) to help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

8 DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE MADE BY A CHILD – ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF

- 8.1 ***If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should consider ways to:***

Receive - Listen actively, use open body language, accept, be non-judgmental. Use TED method for clarity (tell, explain, describe)

Reassure - 'You've done the right thing by coming to me', re-assure them that you have listened and hear what they are saying; don't promise confidentiality

Respond - Tell them what you are going to do and do it. Ensure they are okay before leaving them alone

Report - As soon as possible, to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) in the setting, or your manager of your service

Record - Vital to stick to the facts, no opinions – Think about the context - When? Where? Who? What?

Review – Take responsibility to follow up any referral (via your DSL or manager)

In addition:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay and follow the school's safeguarding process.
- Complete the Yellow Safeguarding incident/Logging a concern form (see Appendix) and pass it directly to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL.

Further information about what to do if you are worried that a child is being abused is available here in advice for practitioners:

[what-to-do-if-you're-worried-a-child-is-being-abused](#)

The role of an appropriate Adult in Safeguarding:

The Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) act advises that "The role of the appropriate adult (AA) is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons",

with there being further elaboration that the AA is expected to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained persons rights and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights. This role is relevant where the police have detained a child or vulnerable person under PACE.

The role of AA is not restricted to specific individuals, in relation to children and young people under the age of 18, PACE guidance sets out that the AA can be: the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.

<https://safeguarding.network/content/safeguarding-and-the-role-of-the-appropriate-adult/>

RECORD KEEPING

8.2 All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

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

Systemic Practice model ([Introduction to Systemic Practice](#)) to be used to capture the child's voice and their daily lived experience.

8.3 We will continue to support any pupil leaving the school about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including Safeguarding and welfare concerns, is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school as a matter of priority.

8.4 School will endeavour to have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home in order to reduce the risk of not making contact with family members where welfare and/or safeguarding concerns are identified. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD – ADVICE FOR THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL) AND DEPUTY DSLs

9.1 In general, the DSL should always discuss any concerns the school may have with the child's parents. They need to know that the school is worried about their child. However, you should not discuss your concerns if you believe that this would place the child at greater risk or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation.

9.2 If you make a decision not to discuss your concerns with the child's parents or carers, this must be recorded in the child's Safeguarding file with a full explanation for your decision and the reason for this decision.

- 9.3 It is important to record and consider the child's wishes and feelings, as part of planning what action to take in relation to concerns about their welfare. Capturing the lived experience of the child is paramount to ensure that actions remain child centred. Systemic Practice is a way of working in partnership with children and young people and families to help them improve outcomes and address issues which prevent them from thriving. Systemic Practice does this by seeking to understand the relationships between family members, and between the family and their wider networks to help professionals understand why the family works the way it does. ([Intro to Systemic Practice](#)) it remains important to capture the child's lived experience **and their own words when possible**.
- 9.4 When talking to children, you should take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, which may not be English. It is also important to consider how a SEND child may need support in communicating.
- 9.5 How you talk to a child will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns. You may need to seek advice from the Integrated Front Door or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised.
- 9.6 If concerns have arisen as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.
- 9.7 It is expected that you discuss your concerns with the parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to the Integrated Front Door, unless you consider that this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.
- 9.8 You do not need the parents' consent to make a referral if you consider the child is in need of protection, although parents will ultimately be made aware of which organisation made the referral. If parents refuse to give consent to a referral but you decide to continue, you need to make this clear to the Integrated Front Door (IFD@wirral.gov.uk / 0151 606 2008).
- 9.9 If you decide to refer the child without the parents' consent, make sure to record this with a full explanation of your decision.
- 9.10 When you make your referral, you should agree with the Integrated Front Door what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when. The school as a relevant agency, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree to the levels for the different types of assessment as part of local arrangements.

MAKING A REFERRAL - If a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect please report it to the **Integrated Front Door**

Mon-Fri, 9:00am – 5.00pm Tel: 0151 606 2008

Outside of these hours Tel: 0151 677 6557

Email: IFD@wirral.gov.uk

In an emergency always call police on 999.
If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency call 101.

The new online Request for Services referral form can be accessed here:

https://wirral-self.achieveservice.com/service/Children_and_families_request_for_support_form

10 SAFER WORKFORCE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (This procedure is detailed in Appendix C)

- 10.1 We will prevent people who pose risks to children from working in our school by ensuring that all individuals working in any capacity at our school have been subjected to safeguarding checks in line with [Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025](#). In addition to obtaining the DBS certificate, anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.

A check of any prohibition can be carried out using the Teacher Services' system that may be found here: <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/> (January 2018)

Prohibition orders are described in the National College for Teaching and Leadership's (NCTL) publication Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers. It can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-the-prohibition-of-teachers--3>

- 10.2 We will ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our school. See Appendix D15, for information on the Single Central Record (SCR). The single central record must cover the following people: all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party and supply staff who work at the school. The Single Central Record is held by the School Business Manager (Mrs Ann Evans) and the Headteacher/DSL (Mrs J Callaway) (See also the school's Safer Recruitment policy)
- 10.3 Every job description and person specification, and job advertisement will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder. The school website will echo this within our vacancies section. The school will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online
- 10.4 We will ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last 5 years.
- 10.5 We have a procedure in place to manage allegations against members of staff, supply staff and volunteers (and to respond to low level concerns) in line with WSCP procedures here: [allegations against staff procedure](#). We will communicate with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), through consultations and referrals when needed. Allegations related to any incidents when an individual or organisation is using

the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, the school will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO' within 24 hours.

- 10.6 Supply teachers – we will consider all allegations against an individual not directly employed by, where disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, (for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency) and ensure allegations are dealt with properly and communication with supply agency and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is continued throughout the investigation.
- 10.7 The school has an agreed staff code of conduct which is compliant with 'Safer Working Practices', and includes - acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships, [low level concerns](#) and communications including the use of social media. The staff code of conduct policy is located on the school's website and available in the staff room
- 10.8. For agency and third party supply staff, school will also include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

Further Guidance for staff working with children can be accessed here:

[Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in educational settings February 2022](#)

11 STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1 All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given induction that includes basic safeguarding training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the Child Protection and safeguarding policy, staff code of conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges and other related policies. All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including [online risks and harm](#)) training at induction. We have mechanisms in place, such as safeguarding updates, to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in [Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). Staff should also read, "[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)." Dec 2023
- 11.2 The induction will be proportionate to staff members' and Governors' roles and responsibilities
- 11.3 All Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will undergo updated DSL safeguarding training every two years. DSL's will also undertake Prevent awareness training and the training will be disseminated to all staff annually.
- 11.4 All staff members of the school will undergo face to face training (whole-school training) which is regularly updated and at least every three years. All governors must undergo governor specific awareness training to equip governors with the knowledge to provide

strategic challenge, so they're assured safeguarding policies/procedures are effective and deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding. This training should be regularly updated. All staff will have access to WSCP multi-agency safeguarding training and e-learning. <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/training/>

- 11.5 Staff members who miss the whole-school training will be required to undertake other relevant training to make up for it, e.g., by joining another school's whole-school training, booking onto whole-school training mop-up sessions. To book mop up sessions visit safeguarding partnership website: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/safeguarding-training-for-schools/>
- 11.6 The nominated governor for safeguarding will undergo training prior to or soon after appointment to the role; this training will be updated every three years. All governors will receive appropriate safeguarding training annually.
- 11.7 We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole-school training if it takes place during their period of work for the school.
- 11.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide briefings to the school on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) in line with [Working Together 2023](#). These will occur annually or more frequently when necessary. <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>
- 11.9 Part one (or Annex A if determined by the governing body) of KCSIE should be read and understood by all staff, Annex B by school leaders and those who work directly with children
- 11.10 The school will maintain accurate and up to date records of staff induction and training.

12 CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

- 12.1 We recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.
- 12.2 The head teacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only
- 12.3 All staff members must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep key information a secret or to themselves which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.
- 12.4 All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 12.5 All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

- 12.6 We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes. School has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

- 12.7 Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

(KCSIE 2025)

School staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

13 INTER-AGENCY WORKING

- 13.1 We will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care. In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent Harmful Sexualised Behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support. More information on the early help process can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- 13.2 We will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings and forums, including child protection conferences and core groups, to consider individual children.

14 CONTRACTORS, SERVICE AND ACTIVITY PROVIDERS AND WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

- 14.1 We will ensure that contractors and service providers are aware of our school's Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and procedures. We will require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.

14.2 We will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with [Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, 2025](#). If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our school premises may be refused.

14.3 When we commission services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.

15 WHISTLE-BLOWING AND COMPLAINTS

15.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so. The school Whistle Blowing policy is located in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Whistleblowing: guidance and code of practice for employers is located: [here](#)
Whistleblowing Advice Line is available for all workers - 0800 028 0285
- Email help@nspcc.org.uk
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/blowing-the-whistle-to-the-department-for-education>

15.2 We will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Safeguarding, which does include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the head teacher, the chair of the governing body or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

15.3 We have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice. We also acknowledge that Low-level concerns can arise in several ways from various sources, e.g. suspicion, complaint or a disclosure. Procedures are in place for confidentially sharing and handling of low-level concerns.

15.4 We will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our Safeguarding arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

15.5 Staff leavers - The details of an individual should be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at the school.

15.6 The School aims to ensure there is a culture of safety and raising concerns and an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the School's safeguarding systems, these should be raised in accordance with the School's whistleblowing procedures which can be found in the staff handbook. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

If staff and volunteers feel unable to raise an issue with the School or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels, such as the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line 0800 028 0285 Email help@nspcc.org.uk

16 SITE SECURITY

16.1 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

- 16.2 We check the identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out in the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge while on the school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance. The visitor policy is located on the school website. WSCP Provide schools with guidance for visitors to school and can be found here: <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/visitors-to-schools-guidance/>
- 16.3 The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.
- 16.4 Where schools are used for non-school activities, those providers are expected to meet the guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings](#). More details regarding safeguarding in sport can be found here: [safeguarding in sport](#)

16.4 VETTING VISITORS AND SPEAKERS

The Prevent statutory guidance requires school to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable. The School's responsibility to our pupils is to ensure that the School can critically assess the information that they receive, and that the information is aligned to the ethos and values of the School and British values.

Accordingly, the school undertakes a range of measures to vet the content of presentations by visiting speakers. The level of checking will be determined by an assessment of the likely level of risk and may include the following measures.

Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that where appropriate their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these. In some cases, the School may request a copy of the Visiting Speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session being provided. The visiting speaker will be asked to provide assurance that the content of the presentation does not include material of a radicalising or extremist nature and is not in any other way inappropriate for the pupils involved.

Visiting Speakers, whilst on the School site, will be supervised by an appropriate member of staff. On attending the School, Visiting Speakers will be required to show original current identification document including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence. Visitors will also be provided with a Visitor's guidance document which includes the identification of the DSL.

Most speakers will be well known to the school (parents, local professionals, religious leaders) and the school will be familiar with their standing and reputation. Where a speaker represents an organisation, for example, the fire service or a charity, identity checks will include verification of the speaker's connection with the organisation.

The school's vetting procedures may include an internet search to check for links with inappropriate organisations or the expression of extremist views which would indicate that it would be inappropriate to address pupils at the school.

The above procedures apply at an appropriate level, to all situations where visitors present to the pupils, not simply formal talks, but also the more informal visits to class, covering topics from dental care to Diwali. The procedures are also followed where speakers visit at the invitation of pupils. Any such pupil invitation must be approved by a member of the School's Leadership team.

EARLY YEARS PROVISION SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

Disqualification from working in childcare

Where staff work in, or are involved in the management of, the School's early years or provision of care of pupils under the age of eight, the School will take steps to check whether those staff are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006. These checks will be undertaken pre-appointment, and from time to time during employment. This forms part of the School's safer recruitment practices, further details of which can be found in the School's Recruitment Policy (located on the school's website)

The School records all checks of staff employed to work in or manage relevant childcare on the Single Central Register. This includes the date disqualification checks were completed.

Where a member of staff is found to be disqualified or if there is doubt over that issue then, pending resolution, the School will remove them from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. Suspension or dismissal will not be an automatic response; the School will consider if there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risks and taking advice from the designated officer when appropriate.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Pupils have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for developmental records. Staff, agency staff, visitors, volunteers and work experience students are not permitted to use their own mobile phones to take or record any images of pupils for their own records.

The Safeguarding information booklet issued to all parents / carers asks parents/carers to indicate whether or not they give permission for their child's photograph to be used on the school website, social media, press releases and in the general marketing of the school.

Any photographs that are taken are stored on the school's computers or network, which are password protected. Photographs may be taken during indoor and outdoor play and displayed in albums or a child's Learning Journey/development records for children and parents to look through. Often photographs may contain other children in the background. Events such as sports day, educational visits, drama and musical performances, Christmas and fundraising events may be recorded and photographs taken by staff and parents, but always in full view of all those attending.

Staff personal phones **should not be used in EYFS**. Visitors are requested not to use their phones in the EYFS setting. Cameras and mobile phones are prohibited in the toilets or changing areas. Further detailed guidance is in the Digital Safety Policy.

DSL for the EYFS

The practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the early years settings is Mrs Alison Prandle Please see contacts list.

Duty to notify Ofsted

The School will inform Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided. For example, where the School is satisfied that a person working in a relevant setting falls within one of the disqualification criteria. Any significant event must be notified to Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the date the School became aware (or ought reasonably to have become aware) of it.

The School will notify Ofsted within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere).

17 QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 17.1 We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.
- 17.2 We will complete an audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership and using the Section 175 online audit tool provided by them for this purpose.
- 17.3 The school's senior management and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

18 POLICY REVIEW

- 18.1 This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year, or with changes to legislation or following an incident, as appropriate.
All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle.
- 18.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that staff members, including volunteers and peripatetic staff are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures
- 18.3 Additional updates to the child protection and safeguarding policy and appendices will take place as and when needed.

Updated Policy Date:
31/08/2025

APPENDIX A:

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

1 MANAGING REFERRALS:

- 1.1 Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety
- 1.2 Refer all safeguarding cases, including Early Help, to the **Integrated Front Door (IFD)** and to the Police if a crime may have been committed. (IFD@wirral.gov.uk)
Identify any safeguarding issues relating to individual children, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- 1.3 Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of child protection and safeguarding, including Contextual Safeguarding.
- 1.4 Escalate inter-agency concerns and disagreements about a child's wellbeing. Further information can be found here: <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/procedures/10-2-multi-agency-escalation-procedure/>
- 1.5 Have responsibility to ensure there is at least one key adult for 'Operation Encompass*' and the point of contact for Child Exploitation. *Guiding principles of the scheme are here <https://www.operationencompass.org/school-participation>. An annual information letter to be sent to parents. All downloadable documents are here: [OE - Resources for school](#). A generic safeguarding email address has been sent to [Operation Encompass](#) to ensure continuity. A key worker completes the online [key adult training](#) annually. Further information on Wirral Operation Encompass can be found here: [OE Information](#)
- 1.6 To ensure that the Local Authority are notified if children are persistently absent or [missing from education](#) Including children who are 'absent' from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods. Or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'.

2 RECORD KEEPING:

- 2.1 Keep written (or online) records of Safeguarding and welfare concerns and ensure a stand-alone file is created as necessary for children with safeguarding concerns
- 2.2 Schools should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home.
- 2.3 Maintain a chronology of significant incidents for each child with safeguarding concerns including a record of decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.
- 2.4 Ensure such records are kept confidentially and securely and separate from the child's educational record.
- 2.5 Where children leave our school, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school to have support in place for when the child arrives. The

designated safeguarding lead should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this will be transferred separately from the main pupil file. The receiving school should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disability (SEND) are aware as required.

Where a parent elects to remove their child from the school roll to home educate, the school will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding records to the Education Social Welfare Service.

3 INTER-AGENCY WORKING AND INFORMATION SHARING:

- 3.1 Co-operate and comply with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- 3.2 Advocate that the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe; and this includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent (KCSIE 2025).
- 3.3 Complete reports and attend, or ensure other relevant staff members attend, child protection conferences, core group meetings and other multi-agency meetings, as required.
- 3.4 Liaise with other agencies working with the child, share information as appropriate and contribute to assessments.
- 3.5 The school's information sharing policy (located on the school website) refers to confidentiality in line with 'Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services' (DfE, 2018).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

4 TRAINING:

- 4.1 Undertake appropriate annual training, **(updated every two years for DSL's)**, in order to:
 - be able to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to them, including special circumstances such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, fabricated or induced illness
 - understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, e.g. WSCP thresholds of need, preventative education and the local offer
 - have a working knowledge of how the local authority conducts initial and review child protection (CP) case conferences and contribute effectively to these; and
 - be alert to the specific needs of children in need (as specified in section 17 of the Children Act 1989), those with special educational needs, pregnant teenagers, young carers, those who are privately fostered, vulnerable to exploitation, radicalisation and subject to listening to or hearing [domestic abuse](#).
- 4.2 Ensure each member of staff has read and understands the school's Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, including providing induction on these

matters to new staff members. Induction and training must include the school's behaviour policy and the school's procedures for managing children who are [missing education](#), or 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education' as well as the staff code of conduct, (including whistleblowing and acceptable use of IT, staff/pupil relationships, communications including use of social media and the school's low level concerns policy) and the child protection and safeguarding policy, digital safety policy and dealing with disclosures and managing allegations processes.

- 4.3 Organise face-to-face whole-school Child protection and Safeguarding training for all staff members at least **every three years**. Ensure staff members who miss the training receive it by other means. The DSL must provide all staff members with safeguarding updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Link to access safeguarding training via Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) is: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/safeguarding-training-for-schools/>
- 4.4 All staff should be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:
- child protection and safeguarding policy
 - behaviour policy
 - staff code of conduct
 - safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
 - role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of policies and KCSIE are provided to staff at induction (**Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025**)

Staff and leaders are also directed to read and refer to - '[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)', as it contains examples of the different types of safeguarding issues.

- 4.5 Ensure the school allocates time and resources every year for relevant staff members to attend training and receive continuous professional development opportunities.
- 4.6 Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any action the school takes to protect them.
- 4.7 Maintain accurate records of staff recruitment, induction, ongoing training and continual professional development (CPD) relating to safeguarding.

5 AWARENESS RAISING:

- 5.1 Ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately.

- 5.2 Ensure the school's child protection and safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies regarding this;
- 5.3 Ensure the child protection and safeguarding policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and
- 5.4 Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements. www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk

6 QUALITY ASSURANCE:

- 6.1 Monitor the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of Safeguarding and welfare concerns files (at a minimum once a year).
- 6.2 Provide regular reports, to the governing body detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and the number of children with child protection plans and other relevant data.
- 6.3 Take lead responsibility for remedying any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in Safeguarding arrangements and through our section 175 audit.

7 SUPERVISION AND REFLECTION:

- 7.1 Working to ensure children and young people are protected from harm requires sound professional judgements to be made. It is demanding work that can be distressing and stressful. It is therefore essential that staff involved in this work have access to advice and a robust process of reflection/ supervision to help them reflect upon and review their work.
- 7.2 The school will have a framework for providing an opportunity to staff who are working directly with vulnerable young people, particularly those who are being managed on a child protection, child in need or team around the family plan, to have regular access to an appropriate manager to talk through and reflect on their involvement with the child's case. A guidance document published by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership for undertaking safeguarding reflection is published on the WSCP website and can be accessed here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/>

APPENDIX B:

Safeguarding Procedure

1 DEFINITIONS:

- 1.1 **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. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. 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.
- 1.2 **Children** are any people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday; a 16-year-old, whether living independently, in further education, in the armed forces or in hospital, is a child and is entitled to the same protection and services as anyone younger. KCSIE now applies to providers of post 16 education as set out Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- 1.3 **Child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and refers to activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, or significant harm is suggested.
- 1.4 **Early help** means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life.
- 1.5 **Harm** is ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.
- 1.6 **Safeguarding children** is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as:
- protecting children from maltreatment;
 - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

School staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating (KCSIE 2025).

All staff must be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults, harassment and sexting. Staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse; and on how the risk of child on child abuse is being minimised, how suspected abuse will be recorded and investigated; as well as how the victims and perpetrators will be supported. Further support and guidance for staff can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

School will record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that we can understand the scale of the problem in school and make appropriate plans to reduce it. More guidance can be found in: [\(KCSIE 2025\)](#).

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or DDSL and managed in line with the school's child protection policy. Victims of harm will be supported by the school's pastoral system.

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

1.7 **Significant harm** is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in the family in the best interests of the child. Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 states 'where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.'

1.8 Early help - Any child may benefit from [early help](#), but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation • is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

2 CATEGORIES OF ABUSE:

2.1 **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.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

2.2 **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 caregivers);
- or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

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

Neglect is the most common reason for a child to be the subject of a child Protection Plan in the UK and research from the NSPCC tells us that 1 in 7 secondary school age children and 1 in 20 children under 11 in the UK have been neglected at some point. To help combat neglect of children the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership has developed and published its multi-agency Neglect Strategy (June 2023): Cherish – [Wirral's Neglect Strategy](#)

2.3 **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.

2.4 **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.

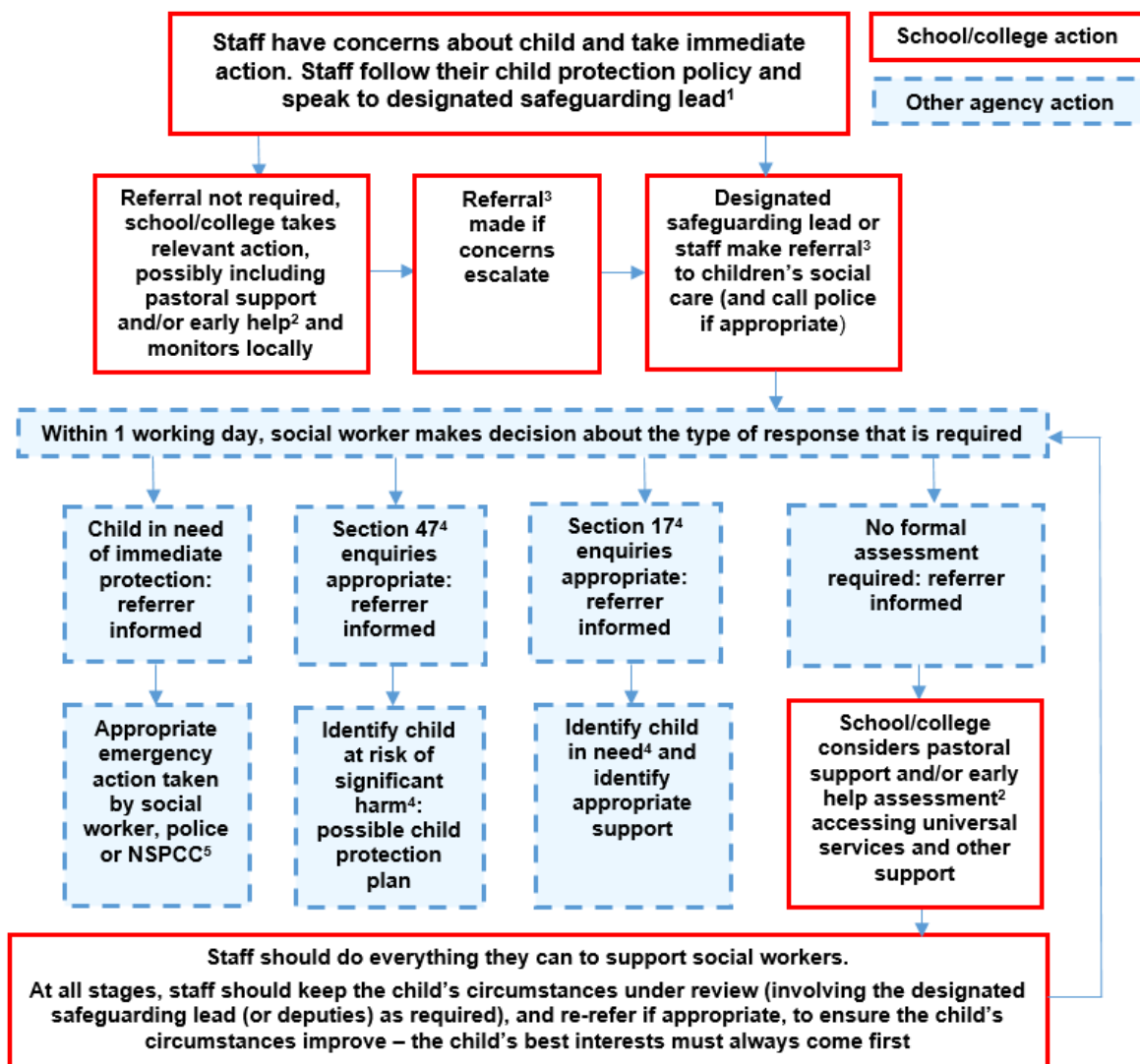
They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit

acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it. (KCSIE 2025)

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

If staff suspect or hear an allegation or complaint of abuse, exploitation, or neglect from a child or any third party, they must act immediately and follow the relevant procedure below. Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

The following diagram is from KCSIE September 2025 (page 24)



The guidance, Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. Fears regarding sharing information under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR should not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children, and neither the DPA 2018 or the UK GDPR prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping

children safe. If in doubt about what information can and should be shared, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL").

All staff should:

- listen carefully
- avoid asking leading questions
- reassure the individual that the allegation/complaint will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- ensure that the individual is not made to feel ashamed for making the report or given the impression that they are creating a problem by making the report
- not guarantee absolute confidentiality (as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child) and explain that the information needs to be passed to the appropriate person who will ensure that the correct action is taken.

All concerns, discussions and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures should be recorded in writing and DSL notified. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and detail of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence and signed by the person making it. The recorded information should be kept confidential and stored securely, ensuring that the file is only accessible to those who need to see it, and is shared in accordance with the guidance advice set out in Parts one and two of *KCSIE*.

Where the allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, if possible the disclosure should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one of them being the DSL or their deputy).

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This is particularly important in the context of harmful behaviours, such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. The School manages this by ensuring that there are systems in place, that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback. The School operates its processes with the best interests of the pupil at their heart.

Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and can occur between children outside School. All staff, but especially the DSL and any deputies, should consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. The School will as part of the wider assessment of children, consider whether environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The School will share as much information with Children's Social Care as possible as part of the referral process to enable consideration of all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

Early Help

Any child may benefit from early help but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing family ostracism
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

In the first instance, staff who consider that a pupil may benefit from early help should discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with WSCP continuum of need. The DSL will support staff in liaising with external agencies and professionals in an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. If early help is appropriate, the matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving.

What staff should do if they have concerns about a child

If staff (including supply staff, peripatetic staff, governors and volunteers) have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the School's DSL to agree a course of action, although staff can make a direct referral to children's social care. As set out above, staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe; they should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. If a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL should press children's social care for reconsideration. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing using the school's Yellow Logging a concern form (see appendix B)

What staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm

If staff (including supply staff, peripatetic staff, governors and volunteers) believe that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, they should make an immediate referral to

children's social care and/or the Police. **Anyone can make a referral.** Any such referral must be made immediately and in any event within 24 hours (one working day) of staff being aware of the risk. Parental consent is not needed for referrals to statutory agencies such as the police and children's social care. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. The local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer within 24 hours and make a decision about the next steps and type of response required. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing and make use of the school's yellow Logging a concern form (see appendix B)

How should staff respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes being shared by pupils

All members of staff in an education setting have a duty to recognise and refer any incidents involving nudes and semi-nudes and will be equipped with the necessary safeguarding training and support to enable them to recognise concerns.

For this purpose, 'sharing nudes/semi-nudes' means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by children under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media (including Snapchat), gaming platforms, chat apps (including WhatsApp and iMessage) or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes may happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and/or via closed social media accounts. The images, videos or live streams may include more than one child.

Any direct disclosure by a child will be taken seriously and staff will ensure the child is feeling comfortable and will only ask appropriate and sensitive questions, in order to minimise further distress or trauma to them.

If staff are notified or become aware of an incident of nudes or semi-nudes being shared by a pupil or of a pupil, they should refer the incident to the DSL as soon as possible.

The DSL will follow the DDMSC / UKIS guidance "*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*" (December 2020) when responding to a report of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes. This will include:

- Holding an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns.
- Carrying out interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).
- Informing parents and carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process in order to best support the pupil unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform them should be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.
- Carrying out a risk assessment to determine whether there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process
- If not, the incident can be handled in school in accordance with the "sharing nudes" guidance and the School's Child Protection and Behaviour policies.
- If it is determined that there is a risk of harm, the DSL must make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

All incidents relating to nudes and semi-nudes being shared need to be recorded in writing and logged, whether they have been referred externally or not. Schools must record the reason for not reporting incidents externally and ensure it is signed off by the Head. Records will be kept in line with statutory requirements set out in *KCSIE* and local safeguarding procedures. No copies of imagery will be taken or retained.

This guidance does not apply to the sharing of images of children under 18 by an adult over 18 as this constitutes child sexual abuse. In the event that staff become aware of such an incident, they should notify the DSL immediately, who should always inform the Police as a matter of urgency.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH CHILD ON CHILD ALLEGATIONS (INCLUDING CHILD ON CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT)

Child on child abuse is abuse by one or more children against another child. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. It can manifest itself in many ways and can include abuse within intimate partner relationships, bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), physical abuse, initiation/hazing violence and rituals, upskirting, sexting, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes, sexual assault, gender-based issues and harmful sexual behaviours including sexual violence and sexual harassment, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

These arrangements apply to all reports and concerns of child on child abuse, whether they have happened in school or outside of it, and/or online. Abuse that occurs online or outside of school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously.

Staff will address inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) to help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up". Nor will harmful sexual behaviours, including sexual comments, remarks or jokes and online sexual harassment, be dismissed as the same or "just having a laugh". Staff will also challenge physical behaviours (that are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

The School acknowledges that even if there have been no reported cases of child on child abuse in relation to pupils within the School, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply just not being reported. The School will ensure that children are aware of how they can report abuse, and that they are aware of the procedures that the School will follow once a report has been made. These procedures will be well promoted and in a format that is easily accessible and easily understood by children.

The School recognises that a child is likely to disclose an allegation to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. By making such a disclosure the pupil is likely to feel that the member of staff is in a position of trust. The School also recognises that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally and that instead they may show signs

or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. It is also recognised that an incident may come to a member of staff's attention through a report of a friend, or by overhearing conversations. It is therefore important that all staff are clear on the School's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse, and can recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and how to respond to reports.

The School recognises that a first disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported. It is not necessarily representative of a singular incident. Staff will take all reports of abuse seriously regardless of how long it has taken for the child to come forward. Staff will act immediately and will support the victim when they raise a concern. The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to peer group isolation than other children and will consider extra pastoral support for those children organised by the SENCO as appropriate. The School also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident of abuse because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

The School takes the following steps to minimise the risk of child on child abuse through promotion of the school culture whereby inappropriate behaviours are challenged. Staff are provided with appropriate and regularly updated training and a preventative curriculum programme is implemented.

Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm', staff should follow the procedures below rather than the School's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies:

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation. The School will take advice from WSCP on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the alleged victim and perpetrator. 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 WSCP, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupils involved are supported during the interview by an appropriate adult and until the investigation is completed. Confidentiality will be an important consideration for the School and advice will be sought as necessary from the WSCP and/ or the Police as appropriate. The School will have regard to the procedures set out in *KCSIE* and the *SVSH* (Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021) at all times.

Police may be informed of any harmful sexual behaviours which are potentially criminal in nature, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia. Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults will be passed to the police. If the DSL decides to make a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police against a victim's wishes, the reasons should be explained to the pupil and appropriate specialist support offered. The DSL may also decide that the children involved may benefit from early help, and may make the necessary referral in accordance with the WSCP referral process.

The School's approach to sexting is to report all such incidents to the DSL as an example of sexual abuse.

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

- Never view, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- Do not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- Do not share information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

The School will follow the DDMSC (Department for Digital Media Sport & Culture) / UKCIS (UK Council for Internet Safety) guidance "Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people" (December 2020) when responding to an allegation that nudes and/or semi-nudes have been shared.

In the event of disclosures about child on child abuse, all children involved (both victim and perpetrator) will be treated as being at risk, and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. Victims will be supported by the DSL or DSL appointed staff member and support from external agencies will be sought, as appropriate.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- the victim;
- whether there may have been other victims;
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, staff) at the School especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

Risk assessments will be recorded and kept under review. In relation to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, the DSL (and indeed all staff) will reassure any victim that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. The victim will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report nor will they be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment; nor would a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or have their experience minimised. The DSL will consider the risks posed to pupils and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe and to ensure their educational attainment is not adversely affected as far as is possible. This may include careful consideration of the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing School premises (including during any before or after school-based activities), or School transport, if used. The School will also consider the risks posed to the victim from other health needs, including physical, mental and sexual health problems, as well as unwanted pregnancy which may arise as a result of the incident, and will consider recommending additional support.

The School will keep a written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made.

The School will reflect on reported concerns, including the decisions made and actions taken, in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or amendments to relevant policies. Where a pattern is identified the School will decide on an appropriate course of action.

In the event that a report is proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Headteacher will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it in accordance with the School's behaviour policy.

3. Mental Health:

- 1.1 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
- 1.2 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one
- 1.3 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
- 1.4 If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. At Avalon, we also have two trained Mental Health First Aiders (for children and adults) in school for staff and children to seek support from. Our Mental Health First Aiders in school are:

Mrs J Callaway (Headteacher)

Mrs D Laverton (Higher Level Teaching Assistant)

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

Staff may also refer to further advice and guidance on [Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#). In addition, Public Health England has also produced guidance on: [Promoting children and young people's emotional health and](#)

[wellbeing](#). Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol.

See [Every Mind Matters](#) for links to all materials and lesson plans.

There are three thresholds for and types of referral that need to be considered:

Is this a child with additional needs; where their health, development or achievement may be adversely affected?

- Age appropriate progress is not being made and the causes are unclear or
- The support of more than one agency is needed to meet the child or young person's needs.

If this is a child with additional needs discuss the issues with the DSL, the child and parents. You will need to obtain parental consent for an EHAT (Early Help Assessment Tool) to be completed.

Is this a child in need matter? Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- they are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.
- their health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired without the provision of such services.
- they are SEND (and as such can face additional safeguarding challenges).

If this is a child in need, discuss the issues with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and parents. Obtain their consent for referral.

Is this a child protection matter? Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 says:

- children at risk or who are suffering significant harm.
- children suffering the effects of significant harm
- serious health problems.

More on the thresholds can be found here:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/multi-agency-thresholds/>

If this is a child protection matter, this should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will need to be referred to the Integrated Front Door by the school as soon as possible.

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/public/concerned-about-a-child/>

APPENDIX B :**Avalon School: Logging a concern form****Pupil's Name:****Date of Birth:****Class:****Date and Time of Incident:****Date and Time (of writing):****Print Name:****Signature:****Job Title:**

Record the following factually: What are you worried about? Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a child use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses? Use of Body Map Yes ___ No ___

What is the pupil's account/perspective?**Professional opinion where relevant.****Any other relevant information (distinguish between fact and opinion). Previous concerns etc.****What needs to happen? Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when.**

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Body Map Guidance



Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

Always use a black pen (never a pencil) and do not use correction fluid or any other eraser.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

***At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, the body map below should be used. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. Social Care or child's social worker if already an open case to social care.**

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record

A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's concern/confidential file.

BODYMAP

(This must be completed at time of observation)

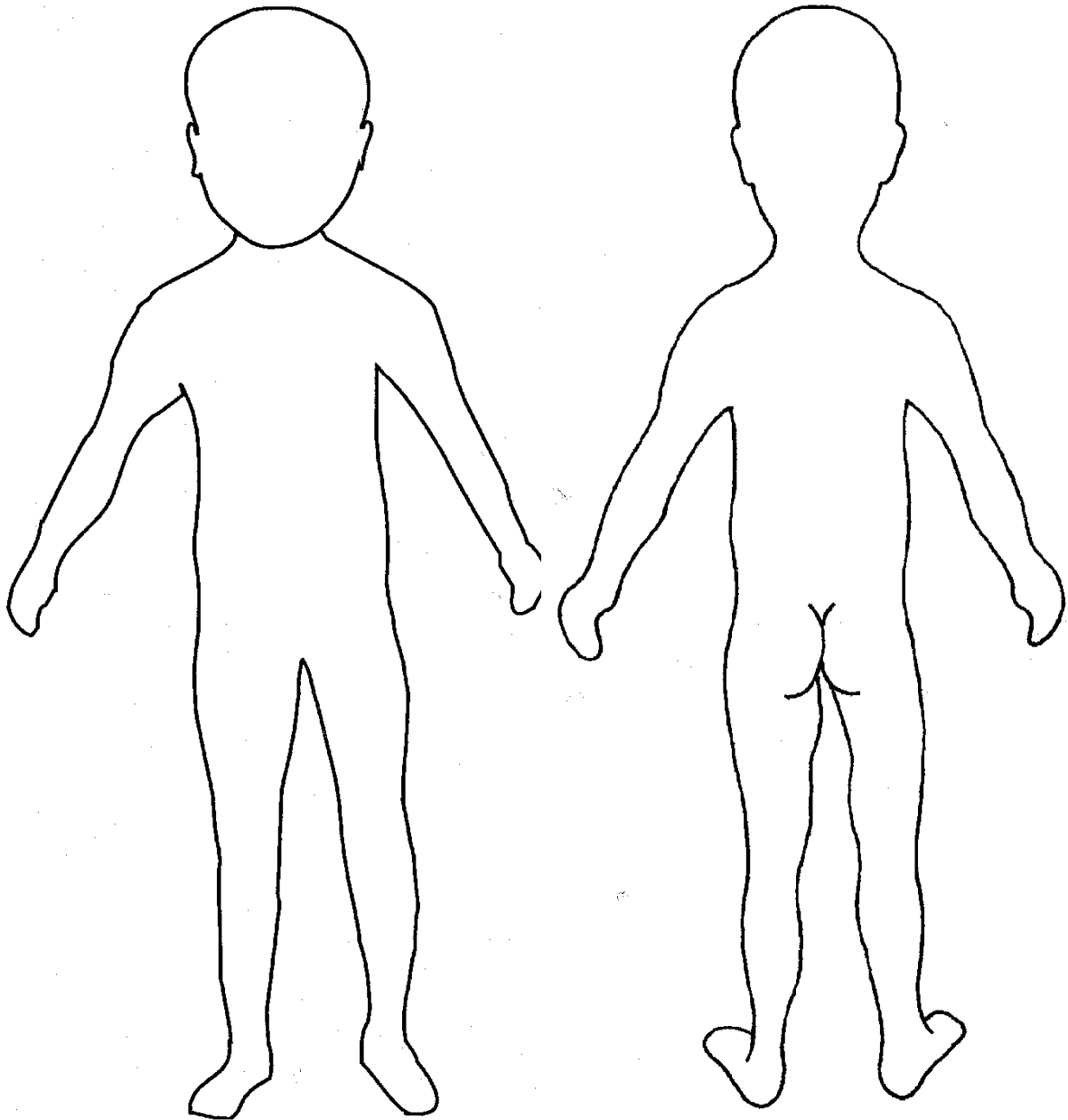
Name of Pupil: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Name of Staff: _____

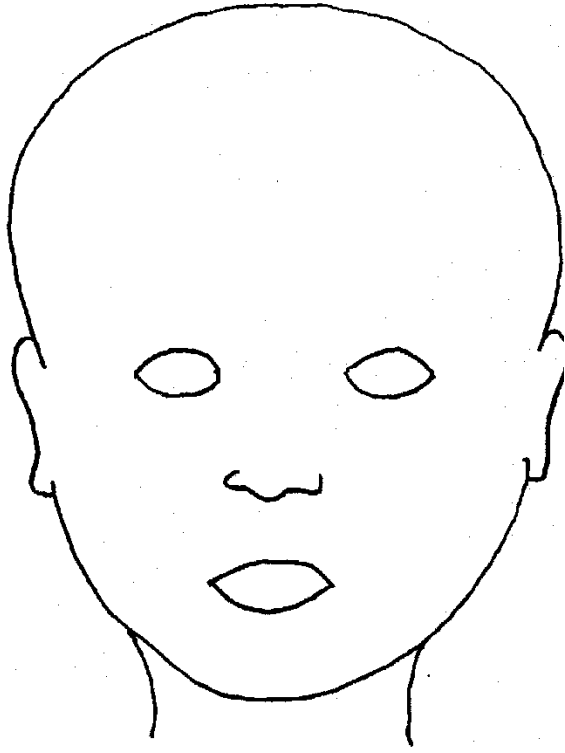
Job title: _____

Date and time of observation: _____

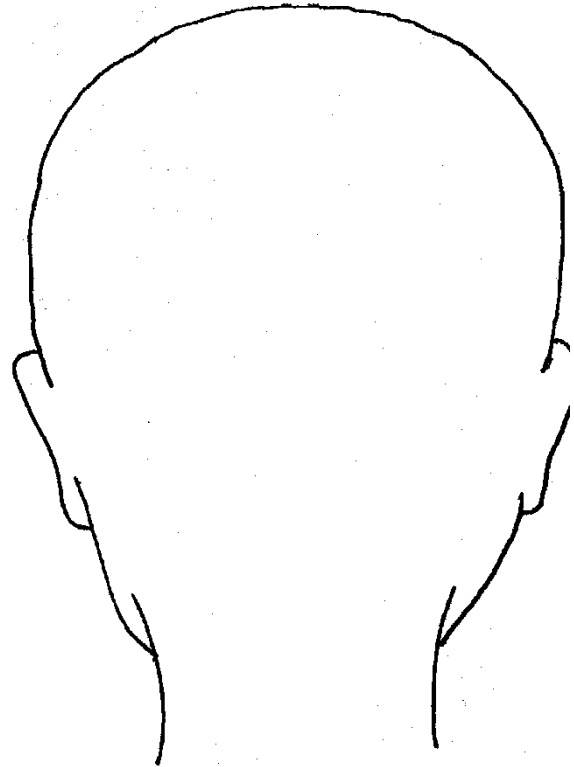


Name of pupil: _____

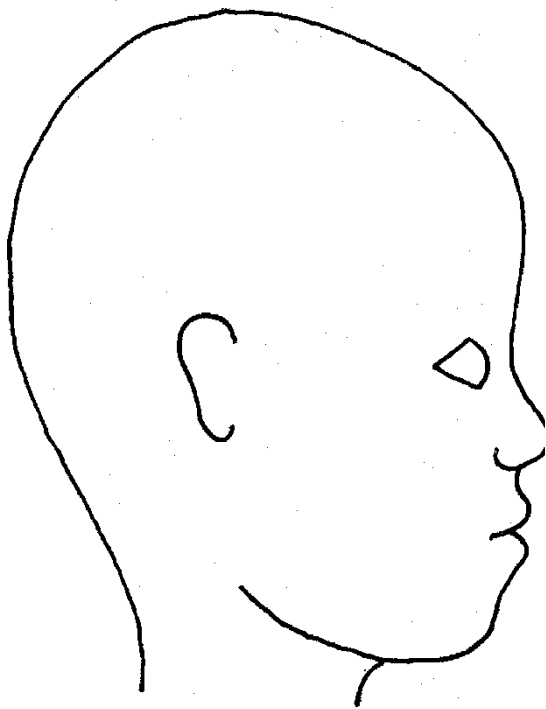
Date and time of observation: _____



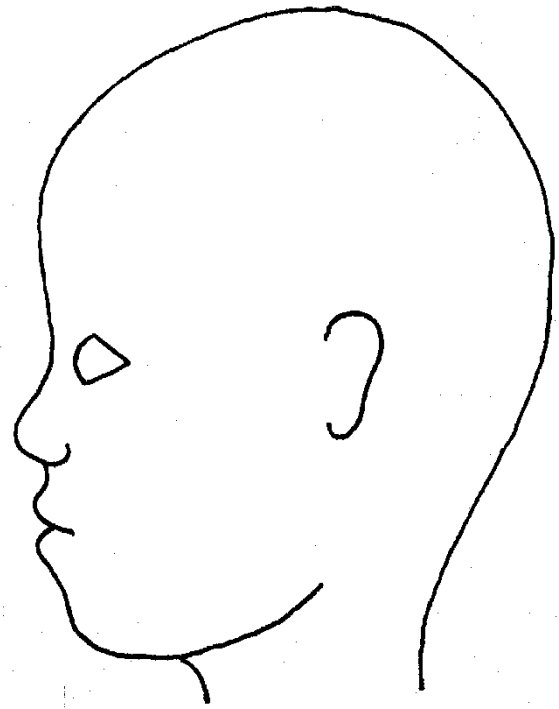
FRONT



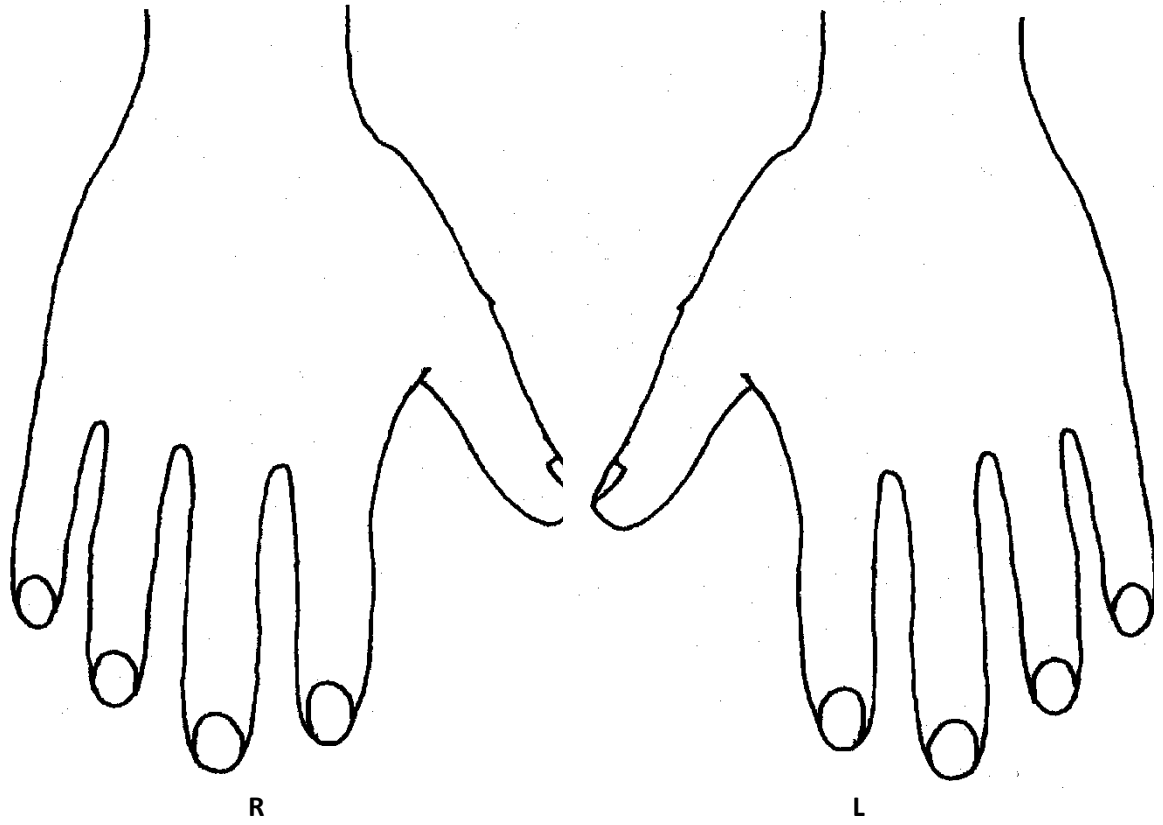
BACK



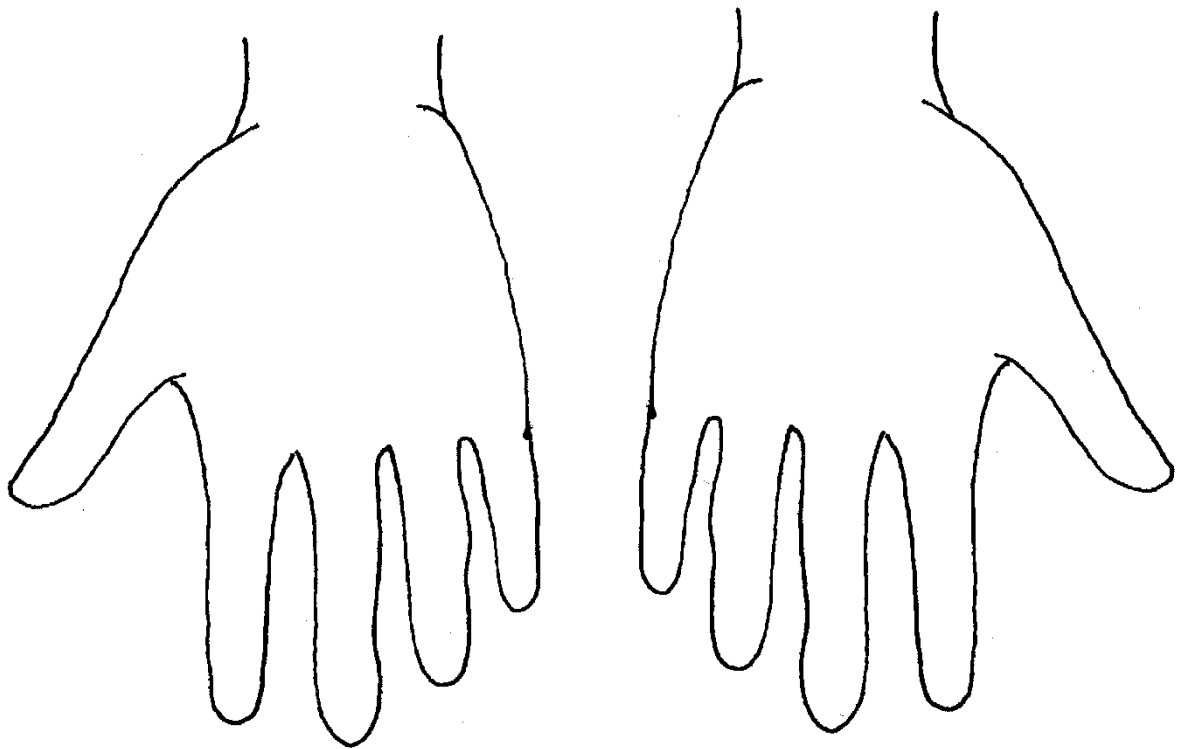
RIGHT

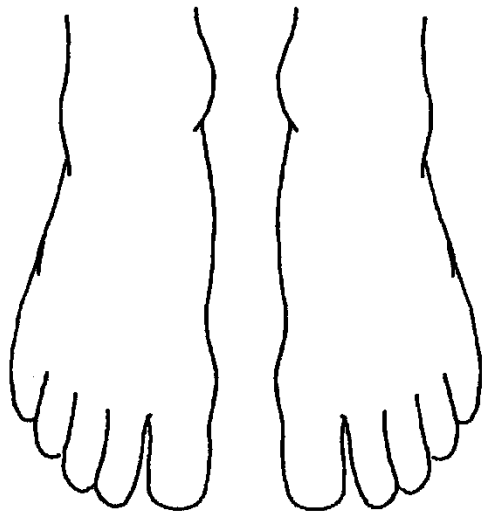


LEFT

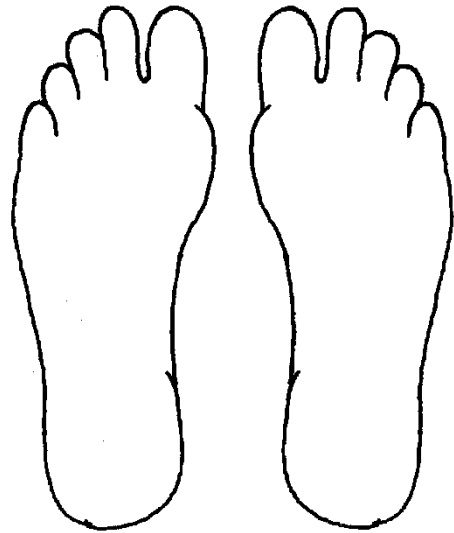


BACK





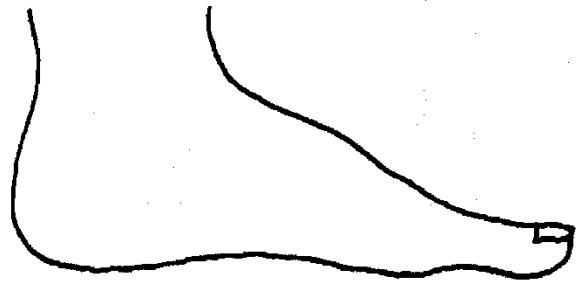
R TOP L



R BOTTOM L



R



L

INNER



R



L

OUTER

Printed Name,
Signature and Job title
of staff:

APPENDIX C: FURTHER INFORMATION & SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

A series of **7-minute briefings** have been designed to inform and engage staff in understanding a wide range of safeguarding concerns. A selection can be found at the end of this document. There are new briefings being added, so staff can access the full range of briefings here: <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/7-minute-briefings/>

- 1 Female Genital Mutilation** - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/harmful-practices/>

Indicators - There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

The FGM resource pack for agencies can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack>

- 1.2 Actions** - If staff have a concern they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Mandatory reporting commenced in October 2015. These procedures remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place. Where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl who is aged under 18, there will be a statutory duty upon that individual to report it to the police.

1.3 Mandatory Reporting Duty

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) will place a statutory duty upon **teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police** where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

The Mandatory reporting duty commenced in October 2015. Teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve the Integrated Front Door as appropriate.

2 Fabricated or Induced Illness / Perplexing Presentation:

- 2.1 Staff must be aware of the risk of children being abused through fabricated illness. There are three main ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:
- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history;
 - fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents;
 - induction of illness by a variety of means.
- 2.2 Where this is identified and considered a risk a referral will be made to **The Integrated Front Door (IFD)** for support and guidance. School may involve other agencies in making their assessments. That could include, community paediatrician, occupational therapists for example: For more on Perplexing presentations go to <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/7-Minute-Briefing-Perplexing-Presentations-and-FII.pdf>

3 Gang and Youth / Serious Violence:

- 3.1 Children and Young People who become involved in Gangs are at risk of violent crime and as a result of this involvement are deemed vulnerable. Agencies and professionals have a responsibility to safeguard these children and young people and to prevent further harm both to the young person and their potential victims. Risks associated with Gang activity include access to weapons (including firearms), retaliatory violence and territorial violence with other gangs, knife crime, sexual violence and substance misuse
- 3.2 **Indicators may be (age in brackets):**
- Troublesome (7-9; 10-12) / High daring (10-12) / Positive attitude towards delinquency (10-12) / Previously committed offences (7-9) / Involved in anti-social behaviour (10-12)
 - Substance use (7-9) / Aggression (7-9) / Running away and truancy (7-9; 10-12) / Marijuana use (10- 12) / Marijuana availability (10-12) / Disrupted family (7- 9; 10-12) / Poor supervision (10-12)
 - Low academic achievement in primary school (10- 12) / Learning disability (10-12) / Peers involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (7-9; 10-12)
 - Children and young people in the neighbourhood involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour (10-12)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>
- 3.3 Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) and CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- **go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;**

- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);

4 'Child Abuse Linked to Faith and Belief':

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

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

4.2 When this type of abuse is suspected staff will make a referral will make a referral to Wirral Integrated Front Door (IFD – 0151 606 2008) for support and guidance. School may request the advice and support of MEAS service in making their assessments. For more information: <http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/calfb/>

Savera UK are a Liverpool based charity which specifically targets Harmful Practices including FGM, Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage.
<https://www.saverauk.co.uk/>

5 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking:

5.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. It is designed to combat modern slavery in the UK and consolidates previous offences relating to trafficking and slavery. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery-bill> The definition of human trafficking is:

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

5.2 Children trafficked into the country may be registered at a school for a term or longer, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad. This pattern of registration and de-registration may be an indicator that a child has been trafficked. It has been identified as a particular concern in schools which are situated near ports of entry, but practitioners should be alert to this possibility in all schools. However, practitioners should always bear in mind that not all children who go missing from education have been victims of trafficking. For example, there may be instances of children from communities that move around – Gypsy, Roma, traveller or migrant families – who collectively go missing from school.

- 5.3 If a member of the school staff suspects that a child may have been trafficked they should act immediately to inform the senior member of staff with designated responsibility for child protection and ensure that police or local authority children's social care are contacted immediately. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. To access support, [click here](#)

6 Risks Associated with Parent/Carer Mental Health:

- 6.1 The majority of Parents who suffer mental ill-health are able to care for and safeguard their children and/or unborn child. Some parents, however, will be unable to meet the needs and ensure the safety of their children. The school will follow the guidance outlined in 'working with parents with mental health problems and their children (Think child, think parent, think family: a guide to parental mental health and child welfare).
- 6.2 Our approach is to recognise; seek support; instil preventive factors and monitor. The Integrated Front Door can provide links and support with Wirral Adult Social Care if required. Designated Safeguarding Lead should seek support through TAF (Team around the Family) with family support but escalate to the Integrated Front Door if they are concerned that the child involved is being placed at immediate risk of harm. The **CAMHS and Early Help Resource-and-Information-Pack** details the Early Help services available to children, young people and their families. The offer includes mental health support services:

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/what-is-early-help/>

- 6.3 **Homelessness** - Homelessness or the risk of it poses a serious threat to a child's welfare. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and their deputies must know how to contact and refer to the Local Housing Authority to act early on concerns. Risk indicators include:

- Debt or rent arrears
- Domestic abuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Eviction or threat of eviction

Referrals to housing services should follow local procedures but must not replace referrals to Children's Social Care where a child is at risk of harm.

Under the [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#), councils must assess needs, create housing plans, and support those at risk. Early intervention is key. While most cases involve families, 16- and 17-year-olds may be homeless independently. In such cases, Children's Social Care is the lead agency, and DSLs must ensure appropriate referrals are made. [See statutory guidance for more details](#)

- 7 **Drugs and Alcohol:** Children can be at risk of drugs and alcohol directly and indirectly. They may be at direct risk of having access to these substances (see guidance on gangs) or indirectly because they affect family life at home through use by parents/carers, siblings, child-minders etc. Risks associated with drugs and alcohol

and built into the year 5-6 curriculum. We work with our partners and Wirral LA to provide curriculum advice and guidance in this area. To access the most up to date Wirral School Drugs Policy click - <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/school-drug-policy/>

More details can be found at: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/substance-misuse/>

8 Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriages:

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

8.2 'A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.' The age to marry has been raised to the age of 18. (Feb 2023) It is now a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th Birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. **KCSIE 2025**

Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.' For more information see;

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage>

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

9 Child abduction and community safety incidents:

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org .

10 Children and the court system:

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate

guides to support children 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds available on the gov.uk website.

The guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. The School may refer some parents and carers to this service where appropriate.

Children with family members in prison: Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The [National Information Centre on Children of Offenders](#), NICCO, provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Domestic abuse:

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional, and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

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 gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

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.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators

should be offered support. The Act's provisions, including the new definition, will be commenced over the coming months.

Domestic Abuse may lead to other safeguarding concerns, and should therefore be managed under this policy.

10 Managing Allegations against staff:

10.1 ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE REGARDING TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF (INCLUDING THE HEAD, GOVERNORS, SUPPLY STAFF, CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS)

The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) who are currently working in the School whether in a paid or unpaid capacity follows DfE statutory guidance and WSCP's arrangements

The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (**LADO**) **must be told of allegations against adults working with children and young people within 24 hours.** Chairs of Governors should refer to this guidance if there is an allegation against the headteacher. This includes all cases that meet the harms threshold where a person is alleged to have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a pupil, or may have harmed a child and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicated that they may pose a risk of harm if they were to work regularly or closely with children and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children , including behaviour that may have happened outside of school.

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school or college, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. Where appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works should be undertaken. If in doubt seek advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO).

9.2 There are two levels of allegation/concern:

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold (see definition above)
2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to in the guidance as 'low level concerns' ([KCSIE 2025](#))

Allegations that do not meet the above harms test should be dealt with using the School's procedure for handling low level concerns are set out below.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the Police. Historical (non-recent) allegations of abuse should be referred to the Police and also the Local Authority 'designated officer' (LADO). Non-recent allegations made by a child will be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with children social care and the Police.

The School should not undertake their own investigation of any allegation without prior consultation with the Local Authority 'designated officer' or, in the most serious cases, the Police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, the School may discuss informally with the 'designated officer' on a no-names basis.

When dealing with allegations about a staff member the School will apply common sense and judgment, deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently and will support the person subject to the allegation.

1. Concerns including allegations which appear to meet the above reporting criteria are to be reported straight away to the 'case manager' who is the Head. Where the Head is absent or is the subject of the allegation or concern, reports should be made to the Chair of Governors.. Where the Head is the subject of the allegation or concern, the Head must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the Chair of Governors and the WSCP designated officer. However, staff may consider discussing any concerns with the DSL and may make any referral via them.
2. The case manager should immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer and consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the Police. (Where the case manager deems there to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence, or it is an emergency situation, the case manager should contact children's social care and as appropriate the Police immediately⁶⁶ and take action to ensure the safety of children). All discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child(ren) agreed.⁶⁷ The designated officer should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to the School's attention and appear to meet the criteria or that are made directly to the Police and/or children's social care.⁶⁸ The DSL is responsible for ensuring the child is not at risk.
3. Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community, or the member of staff's family, they will discuss these concerns with the designated officer and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the designated officer to make a referral to children's social care.
4. When to inform the individual who is the subject of the allegation will be considered on a case by case basis and with guidance from the designated officer, and if appropriate, the police and/or children's social care. Subject to any objection, the case manager will ensure that the individual who is subject of the allegation is informed as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course or action. The case manager will appoint a named representative to keep the individual informed of the progress of the case and will consider what other support is appropriate for the individual.
5. The case manager should give careful consideration as to whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension from contact with children at the School or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place until the allegation is resolved. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. It

should be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the School is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The case manager will give due weight to the views of the designated officer, *Working Together* and *KCSIE* when making a decision about suspension. Where the individual is suspended, the case manager will confirm the decision within one working day, and will ensure they know who their point of contact is in the School and shall provide them with their contact details.⁷¹ The case manager will also record the rationale and justification for the suspension, including what alternatives were considered and why they were rejected.

6. Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the designated officer and case manager should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation should usually be undertaken by a senior member of staff at the School. Where there is lack of resource, or the nature or complexity of the allegation requires it, an independent investigator may be appointed to undertake the investigation.
7. The case manager will ensure that parents are informed as soon as possible and kept informed about progress of the case, subject to any advice from children's social care or the Police. Parents and others will be made aware that there are restrictions on publishing information which may lead to the identification of the teacher subject to the allegation.
8. The case manager will monitor the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process. Reviews are conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case. The first review will take place no later than four weeks after the initial assessment and subsequent review dates will be set at the review meeting.
9. The case manager will discuss with the LADO whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Teaching Regulation Agency should be made where an allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the School ceases to use their services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services. The School has a legal obligation to report promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.⁷⁵ Further, or in the alternative, if an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation prior to dismissal of a member of teaching staff specifically, the School must consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence).
10. On conclusion of the case, the case manager should review the circumstances of the case with the designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's safeguarding procedures or practices to help prevent similar events in the future.⁷⁷

The School has a duty of care to its staff, and whilst the welfare of a child is paramount, the

School must offer appropriate welfare support to the adult subject to the investigation and potentially their family. The School will also make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. Information will also not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

Where initial discussions lead to no further action, the case manager and the designated officer should record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned, and by whom.

Allegations found to be malicious or false will be removed from the individual's personnel records unless the individual gives consent for retention of the information. In all other circumstances a written record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file in accordance with *KCSIE*⁷⁹ and a copy will only be provided to the individual concerned.⁸⁰ Schools have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the duration of the inquiry in accordance with the guidelines of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse ("IICSA"). All other records should be retained until the accused has reached pension age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer.⁸¹

Allegations proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious will not be included in employer references.⁸² If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against a pupil who made it in accordance with the schools behaviour policy; or whether the Police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible even if they are not a pupil.⁸³

The Governing body has processes to deal with concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold. Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

Avalon School has appropriate policies and processes in place to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children.

'Low Level Concerns' - Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. 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; or,
- using inappropriate sexualized, intimidating or offensive language or
- humiliating pupils

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

10.3 The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) in Wirral is:

Kevin Dykes

- **email any referral and /or consultation form to:** safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk and kerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk

If judged appropriate during the initial contact with the LADO, an Allegations Referral Form must be completed by the senior manager in full and forwarded to the LADO via email within 24 hours. LADO referral form, flowcharts and information can be accessed here: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/lado-allegations>

The LADO procedure does not replace safeguarding procedures and the **Integrated Front Door** (IFD@wirral.gov.uk) must be contacted if you have a safeguarding concern about a child.

The LADO can only provide advice and guidance regarding allegations in relation to a person in a position of trust. Any general safeguarding enquiries or concerns should be reported to Wirral Integrated Front Door on 0151 606 2008 or 0151 677 6557 out of hours.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE ABOUT SUPPLY TEACHERS AND CONTRACTED STAFF

The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff above also apply to staff not directly employed by the School, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency. School will usually take the lead but agencies should be fully involved (because they have their own policies and procedures) and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social care.

In no circumstances will the School decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. The School will discuss with the agency (or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools) whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

The School will advise supply teachers being investigated to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the School during the investigation.

When using an agency, the School should inform the agency of its process for managing allegations but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

Where the agency dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, the School must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH LOW LEVEL CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS (I.E. THAT DO NOT MEET THE HARMS TEST) ABOUT TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF (INCLUDING THE HEAD, GOVERNORS, SUPPLY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS)

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

A 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A concern may be a low-level concern, no matter how small, even if it does no more than give a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse (for example, grooming-type behaviours).

The School takes all concerns about safeguarding seriously and recognises that addressing even low-level concerns is important to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the School's values and expected behaviour of its staff are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

The School's staff code of conduct can be found on the school website. The aim of the code of conduct is to provide clear guidance about the standards of appropriate behaviour and actions of its staff so as to not place pupils or staff at risk of harm or of allegation of harm to a pupil. All staff are expected to comply with the standards contained within this code of conduct at all times.

Staff must share all concerns with the DSL (or a deputy) without delay so that it can be recorded and dealt with appropriately, sensitively, and proportionately and in a timely manner. Where a low-level concern is raised about the DSL, it should be shared with the Head. Where the Head is the DSL or if the low-level concern relates to the Head, it should be shared with the Chair of Governors.

Staff are also encouraged to self-refer in the event that they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on

reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

If a concern is raised by a third party, the DSL will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking to the person who has raised the concern (if known), to the individual involved and any witnesses. The concern will be recorded in accordance with this policy, in the usual way.

The School will address unprofessional behaviour at an early stage and will support the individual to correct it.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing by the DSL. The record will include details of the concern, the context within which the concern arose, and details of the action taken. The name of the reporting individual should also be included, unless they have asked to remain anonymous, which will be respected as far as reasonably possible. The records will be kept confidential, will be held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR at all times. The information will be retained for 10 years or until the individual has left employment, whichever is longer.

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be disclosed, for example, misconduct or poor performance.

The School will also reflect on reported concerns in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate a unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or modified policies. Where a pattern is identified, the School will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures, or, where the pattern moved from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, it will follow the above procedure and refer the matter to the designated officer.

Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency or a contractor, staff should share that concern with the DSL (or deputy), and/or the Head. The concern will be recorded in accordance with the School's low-level concern, and the individual's employer will be notified about the concern, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

10 Preventing Radicalisation:

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

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends

or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media 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. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme

10.1 Prevent - From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the **Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 ('The CTSA 2015')** Schools must have regard to statutory PREVENT GUIDANCE issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015 and the **Contest strategy.** Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools' responsibility to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism."

This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies.

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

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

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

The Single Point Contact for Wirral is Andrea Bignall, Andrea.Mears@merseyside.police.uk. All assessments are to be carried out via Integrated Front Door. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#).

The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent **awareness training** to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. *As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.* <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/7-minute-briefings/>

Schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when **accessing the internet** in schools. Avalon School ensures that suitable filtering is in

place using the Watchguard Total Protection Filtering package. Through our curriculum provision we will ensure that we teach pupils about online safety. Further information and guidance is available on the WSCP website: <https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/radicalisation-and-extremism/>

The Department for Education has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty and is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

10.2 Channel

School staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel team. 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. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and, where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education and, as partners, are required to cooperate with local Channel panels. Channel guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance> [More on Channel and Prevent Process - Wirral](#)

Avalon School Prevent Risk Assessment:

The Prevent Strategy aims to protect vulnerable young people from being drawn into terrorism. Avalon School recognises that, as with other forms of safeguarding strategies, early intervention is always preferable. Our school is committed to working with other local partners, families and communities, and we will play a key role in ensuring young people and school staff are safe from the threat of terrorism. In order to maximise the effect of 'Prevent' in our school we have carried out a school self-assessment. This has involved the following steps:

- Leadership - the Senior Leadership Team and Governors are aware of the Prevent Strategy and its objectives. The Headteacher is the strategic Prevent lead and has undergone training with Wirral Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Supporting young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation is embedded into the Safeguarding Policy.
- Capabilities - the SLT drives the implementation of the Prevent Duty with annual whole staff reminders and more regular updates for teachers. There is appropriate guidance and literature available to staff in the Prevent agenda in the safeguarding and government policies on the Safeguarding Display Board in the staffroom. All staff undertake the on-line training made available at <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

- Risk Assessment - all staff show understanding of risks affecting pupils and procedures in place to support those who may be at risk. All Staff know that the DSL is the single point of contact for any Prevent concerns. The DSL (and DDSL) has received training in Channel and understands when to refer a case to them. There is a clear procedure for information to be placed in the Safeguarding records files and clearly marked with 'Prevent' concern.

Working in Partnership - partner agency communication channels have been developed with Merseyside Police through the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership, and also through the Independent School's Association. Avalon also works to ensure that all partner organisations used for sports or music provision (or in any other way) also receive an induction on safeguarding.

- Teaching and Learning - the school has a range of initiatives and activities that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs of our pupils and are aimed at protecting them from radicalisation and extremist influences. The school delivers information to parents about the SMSC and PSHCEE curriculum and also asks parents to be aware of the cyber use of their children at home. The school has systems in place to safeguard students using extremist websites. The school provides a safe environment for dialogue around controversial issues and how to handle them sensitively with primary age children. Extremist speakers will not be invited to the school.

11 Child Missing Education: All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'.

11.1 A child going [missing from education](#) is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff should follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'. particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

11.2 Avalon school will ensure that there are appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'. particularly children who are 'absent' from education, particularly on repeat occasions or for prolonged periods.. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. An appropriated response is made when a child has poor attendance or is regularly missing education. or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'. [Missing Education guidance is here.](#)

11.3 School will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been certified by an appropriate medical practitioner as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and it is not reasonable to believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

11.4 The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. **School will contact the Admissions section: Tel: 0151 666 4600.** This will be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, or those 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'. follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

12 Child Sexual Exploitation & Child Exploitation (CE):

12.1 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** - CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be

vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

The department provide: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners

A full list of indicators can be found here: <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/child-exploitation/>

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

12.3 **County lines** is a term used to describe gangs, groups or drug networks that supply drugs from urban to suburban areas across the country, including market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or ‘deal lines’. They exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money to and from the urban area, and to store the drugs in local markets. They will often use intimidation, violence and weapons, including knives, corrosives and firearms. County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

Further information and PAN Merseyside CE / CCE Documentation can be found here: <https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/child-criminal-exploitation-and-county-lines/>

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Cybercrime

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

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal ‘hacking’), for example accessing a school’s computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or ‘booting’. These are attempts to make a

computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources;

and, • making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices <http://www.cyberchoices.uk/> 'NPCC- When to call the Police' [When to call the police](http://www.npcc.police.uk/when-to-call-the-police/) and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/>

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

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

Further information and documentation can be found here:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/child-sexual-exploitation-cse/>

13 **Sexual harassment, violence, violence against women and girls (VAWG) harmful sexual behaviours (inc. child on child abuse, and 'upskirting')**

- 13.1 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- 13.2 It is important that schools are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both

inside and outside of school.. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

- 13.3 Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools and colleges can be found in [\(KCSIE 2025\)](#). The Wirral Youth Justice Service have developed a multi-agency HSB identification tool to help professionals determine and assess the level of sexual behaviours being displayed by a child.

The tool, and included guidance sets out, for different age ranges what are expected and normal behaviours, what are inappropriate or concerning, and what are likely to be harmful. For each level of behaviour the tool provides clear advice about how to respond.

Click here for the [Wirral Identification Tool](#).

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

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

The Wirral Domestic Abuse Alliance and the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership have published the [Wirral Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls strategy](#). emphasis on prevention and education involves closer work with schools and colleges. This can be viewed here: [VAWG Strategy](#)

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) - it is never a child's responsibility to prevent abuse, protect themselves or make the abuse stop. By better understanding child sexual abuse, having conversations and highlighting concerns, we can play a role in protecting children. We will use the [CSA Response Pathway](#) to respond to concerns of child sexual abuse at key points: from first concerns and early help safeguarding through to child protection and criminal justice responses.

- 13.4 Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents. Schools must record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised

behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own schools and make appropriate plans to reduce it. For more guidance go to: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/644242/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools.pdf)

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or DDSL and managed in line with the school's child protection policies. Victims of harm should be supported by the school's pastoral system and their wishes and feelings considered and that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.

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

Upskirting - 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. Upskirting will not be tolerated by the school and any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may involve police involvement.

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales -](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sexual-consent/)

Sexual consent

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

14.1 Digital Safety, Remote Learning & Filtering and Monitoring:

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation- technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers our school to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate.

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material, encompassing, but not limited to: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm
- commerce: the risk from being exposed to things like online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams

The school's Digital Safety policy, which covers the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g., iPads. For online safety, there is within the policy support about children accessing the internet whilst they're at school using data on their phones (3G or 4G networks). The policy reinforces the importance of online safety, including making parents aware of what the school asks children to do online (e.g. sites they might visit or who they'll be interacting with online) and aims to reflect that many children now have unrestricted access to the internet, which some of them may abuse to sexually harass their peers, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually and view and share harmful content.

The school makes provision for teaching children to keep themselves safe, including on-line and when accessing remote learning.

The Governing Body will do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT system and ensure the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. The school uses appropriate filters to monitor internet usage within school (Watch Guard Firewall Package)

At Avalon School, pupils are not permitted to have personal mobile phones during the school day. If a pupil brings a mobile phone (or other personal device with access to the internet) to school, the mobile phone / device must be switched off and left at the School office during the school day, until the pupil is leaving the school or is collected (see also Mobile Phone & Device policy).

14.1 Filtering and monitoring

Whilst considering our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the governing body will consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus risks. Additional support documents can be found here: [digital safety](#)

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: [UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring](#). There is guidance below designed to help parents

and carers to keep their children as safe as possible when online:
<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/online-safety-guidance-parents/>

Use of AI imagery will be monitored in line with the Child Protection-Safeguarding Policy (Computer systems and software that are able to perform tasks that ordinarily require human intelligence, such as decision-making and the creation of images).

All staff are to understand their role in the published standards for 'Filtering and Monitoring'. and DSLs are expected to have the 'lead responsibility'. The standards can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>. Further support on digital safety, filtering and monitoring can be found [here](#):

Staff receive training about Filtering and Monitoring and the Board of Governors are supported to understand their role in Filtering and Monitoring. The DSL will have 'lead responsibility' for Filtering and Monitoring and this forms part of the job description.

- 14.2 The policy for remote learning that demonstrates an understanding of how to follow child protection - safeguarding procedures when planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely. The school maintains the capability to provide remote education when it is not possible for some or all of their pupils to attend in person.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools>

15 Pre-Appointment Checks and Safer Recruitment:

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

- 15.2 When appointing new staff, school will

- Verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the [GOV.UK website](#); For details of changes to the guidelines from April 2025 click [here](#).
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity);
- Evidence of current address for identity – when using [Route One](#) for identity check, schools no longer need to obtain or verify address information, however every DBS application form still requires a full 5-year address history. Three documents confirming name and date of birth are sufficient (for example, a biometric passport, photocard driving licence, and a birth certificate).
- Schools are expected ID to confirm the applicant's identity, which includes being satisfied that their address history is accurate and consistent with other information (e.g. employment history, references).
- In cases where documents don't confirm the current address, schools will still need to verify it through other appropriate means.

- School is clear on who can verify identity (as relatives, friends, or household members cannot act as ID checkers), and verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
 - verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, follow advice on the [GOV.UK website](#);
 - if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate and verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
 - carry out prohibition check for all staff with QTS
 - complete a risk assessment for each volunteers to decide whether they need to do an enhanced DBS check or not. (Please note:, even if it is decided an enhanced DBS is to be requested, if the volunteer is not in regulated activity, then you're not legally allowed to do a barred list check).
 - Carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence (and informing them of this prior to any searches) to help identify any issues that are publicly available online
 - for the safeguarding of children in the school. Where this is the case, the member of staff must speak to the school (Childcare Act 2006 – as amended).
 - verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
 - verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
 - if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, school will make any further checks the school consider appropriate and verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
 - carry out prohibition check for all staff with QTS
 - complete a risk assessment for each volunteer to decide whether they need to do an enhanced DBS check or not. (Even if it is decided an enhanced DBS is to be requested, if the volunteer is not in regulated activity, then school's are not legally allowed to do a barred list check).
 - Carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence (and informing them of this prior to any searches) to help identify any issues that are publicly available online
- 15.2 The school safer recruitment policy has a focus on ensuring potential applicants are given the right messages about the school's commitment to recruit suitable people. [The DBS Identity Checking Guidelines](#) (April 2025) refer to retaining identity check records and documents used to evidence identity for the duration of a person's employment, plus six years. This aligns with the data retention schedule advocated by the Government and can be found [here](#). *Further safer recruitment guidance can be found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#)*

15 Single Central Record:

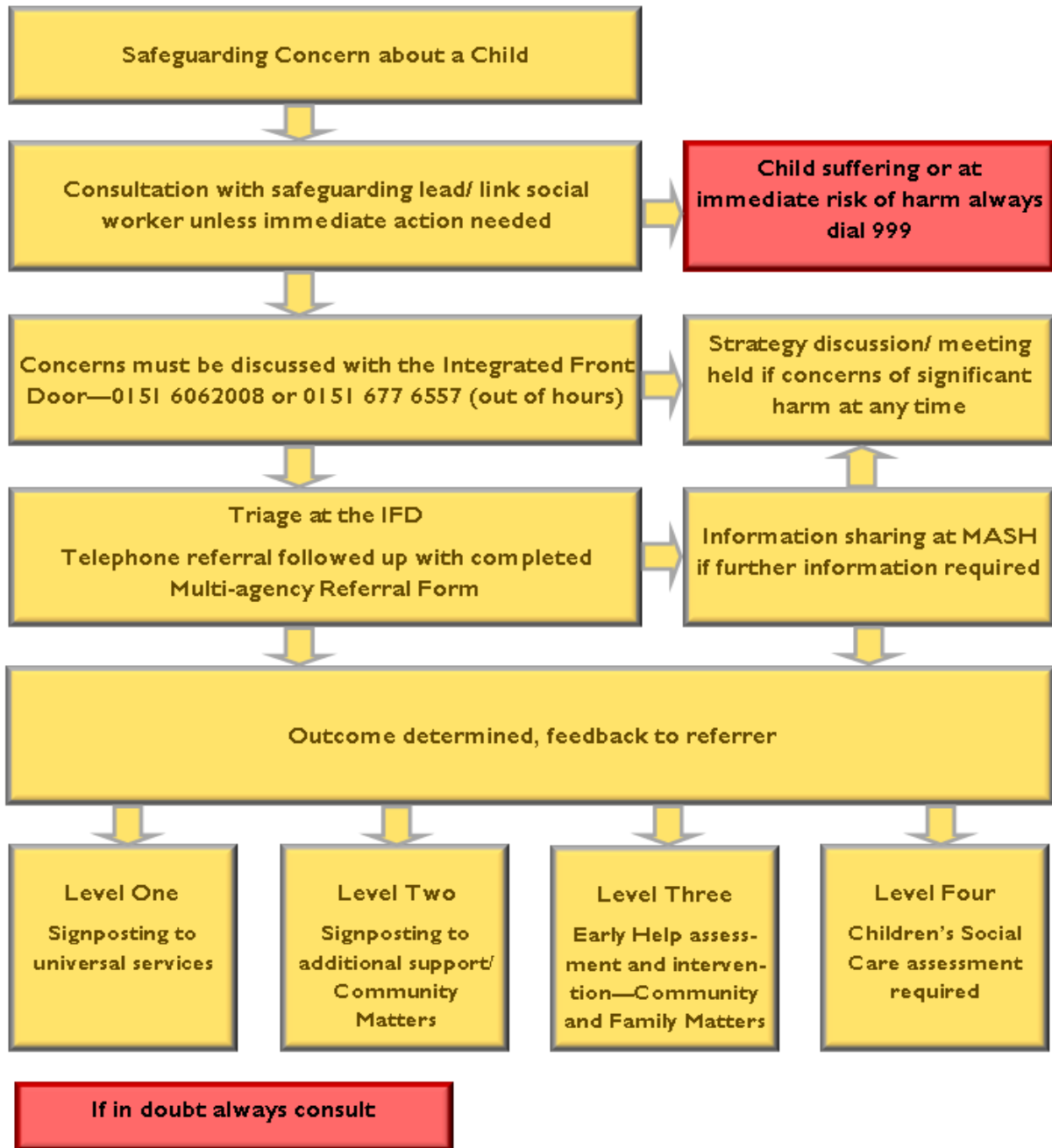
- 15.3 Schools must keep a single central record. The single central record must cover the following people:

- all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school
 - The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried route) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:
 - an identity check / a barred list check / an enhanced DBS check/certificate / a prohibition from teaching check;
 - further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK; this would include recording checks for those EEA teacher sanctions and restrictions
 - a check of professional qualifications; and a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 15.4 For supply staff, schools should also include whether written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of supply staff, and the date that confirmation was received.
- 15.5 A record of staff leavers is maintained on the Single Central record.
- 15.6 The SCR shall be updated in the light of any further legislation.
- 15.7 Where school premises are used for non-school activities, those providers are expected to meet the guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings](#).

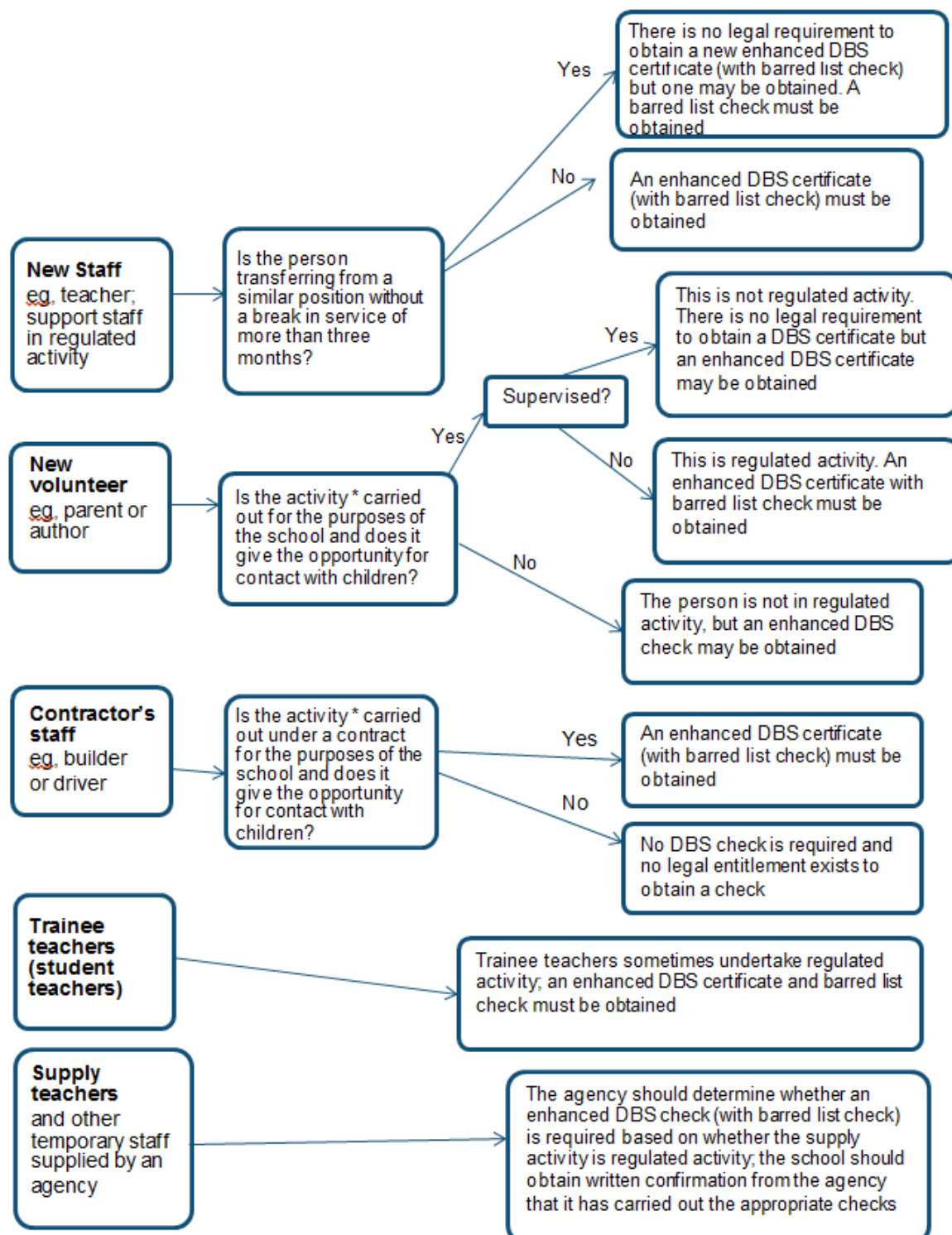
APPENDIX D1



Actions to take when there are safeguarding concerns about a child

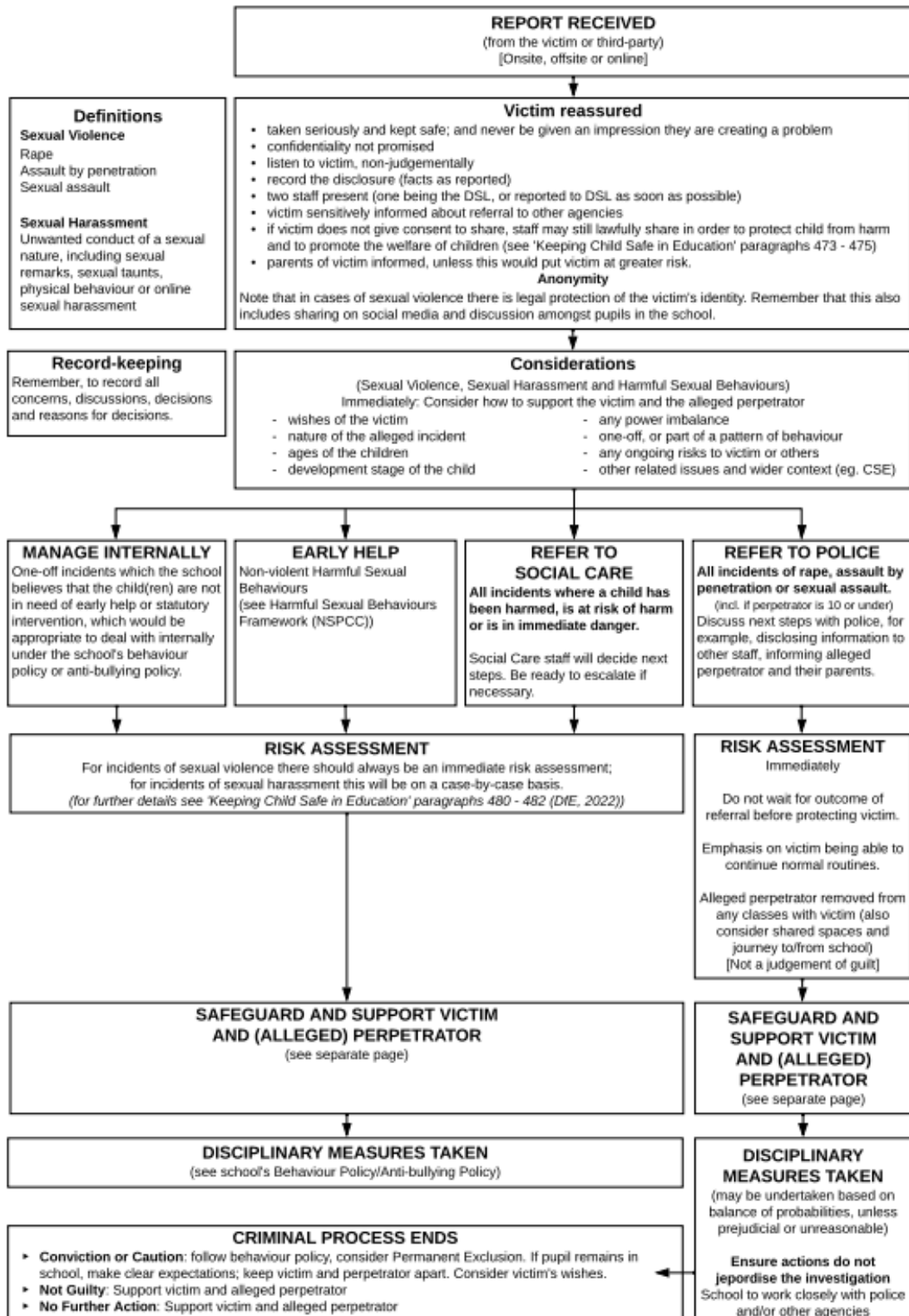


Appendix D2: Flow Chart- Disclosure and Barring Service criminal record checks and barred list checks



* Activities listed under the guidance's definition of regulated activity and which are carried out 'frequently'

***PART FIVE: CHILD-ON-CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**



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LADO FLOWCHART

STAGE ONE

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN 2018 REQUIRES EMPLOYERS TO INFORM LADO WITHIN ONE WORKING DAY OF BECOMING AWARE OF AN ALLEGATION.

IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD IS AT RISK OF IMMEDIATE HARM CONTACT IFD AND / OR MERSEYSIDE POLICE VIA 101 EMPLOYER TO COMPLETE LADO CONSULTATION FORM AND SEND TO safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk LINK TO WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP WHERE LADO INFORMATION AND FORMS ARE AVAILABLE.

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/lado-allegations/>

LADO WILL LIAISE WITH EMPLOYER AND POLICE AND MAKE A DECISION ON WHETHER THE CONCERNS MEET THE THRESHOLD FOR FORMAL LADO INVESTIGATION.

IF THRESHOLD IS NOT MET CONSULTATION WILL BE CLOSED AT THIS STAGE. LADO WILL RECORD DECISION ON CONSULTATION FORM AND RETURN TO EMPLOYER

IF THRESHOLD IS MET EMPLOYER WILL BE REQUESTED TO COMPLETE LADO REFERRAL FORM



STAGE TWO

LADO WILL CONVENE A LADO MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS MEETING WITHIN FIVE WORKING DAYS

AT THIS MEETING THE PLAN OF INVESTIGATION WILL BE AGREED TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ANY POLICE INVESTIGATION AND SAFEGUARDING ACTIONS WILL BE CONFIRMED.

TIMEFRAME WILL BE AGREED AND SUPPORT TO THE EMPLOYEE WILL BE CONFIRMED.

EMPLOYER TO UPDATE LADO DURING INVESTIGATION.

EMPLOYER TO INVOKE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES IF APPROPRIATE.



STAGE THREE.

LADO CLOSURE MEETING HELD AND WILL INVOLVE ALL APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONALS WHERE THE EMPLOYER WILL PRESENT THEIR FINDINGS/ACTIONS.

OUTCOME TO THE LADO PROCESS AGREED BY ALL PROFESSIONALS.

SUBSTANTIATED - There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation that a child has been harmed or there is a risk of harm.

UNFOUNDED - There is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. The chair of the meeting / discussion should make a record of the agreed outcome and forward this to the employer

UNSUBSTANTIATED - There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence

MALICIOUS - There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive. The police should be asked to consider what action may be appropriate in these circumstances

FALSE ALLEGATIONS - There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation. There is no evidence to suggest that there was a deliberate intention to deceive. False allegations may be an indicator of abuse elsewhere which requires further exploration. If an allegation is demonstrably false, the employer, in consultation with the LADO, should refer the matter to local authority children's social care to determine whether the child is in need of services, or might have been abused by someone else.

CLOSURE MEETING WILL AGREE ON DBS REFERRAL IF APPROPRIATE AND CLOSURE LETTER TO EMPLOYEE.

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/lado-allegations/>

1. What is it?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (Fully described in the DfE guidance and in KCSIE). This briefing will focus on peer sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated / create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It is important that schools are aware and that children can, & sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way.

2. What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can include: sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names / sexual "jokes" or taunting / physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature / online sexual harassment / non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include: sexualised online bullying / unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media / sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and 'Upskirting'.

3. Why is it important?

The Department for Education (DfE) first published guidance on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges, in 2017 (updated May 2018) which means that schools and colleges in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The advice covers children of all ages, from the primary through secondary stage and into colleges. Whilst the focus of the advice is on protecting and supporting children, schools and colleges should of course protect any adult students and engage with adult social care, support services and the police as required.

7. Recommended Reading:

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England \(September 2017\)](#)

[Hackett, S. \(2014\) Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours.](#)

NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

6. What should we do?

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

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



For school safeguarding support and training go to:

<https://www.wirral Safeguarding.co.uk/schools-2>

4. Key Statistics

Evidence and crime statistics suggest that anywhere from 1/5 to 2/3's of sexual abuse is committed by other children and young people. The NSPCC uses the figure of 1/3 as a mid-way point between the lower end and the higher end of the estimates.

37% of female students and 6% of male students at mixed-sex schools have personally experienced some form of sexual harassment at school. Girls are significantly more likely to be victimised with unwanted sexual messages and images from their peers online, with 31% of female respondents aged 13-17 years saying they had experienced this in 2019 compared to 11% of male respondents.

5. What is the impact?

Sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. All staff should be aware of indicators and importance of making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated / not dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter" / challenging behaviours (such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. The school safeguarding procedures should be transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents and carers.

1. What is Peer Sexual Abuse?

It's normal for children to display a range of sexual behaviours as they grow up, but sometimes their behaviour can be harmful to themselves and others. Around a third of child sexual abuse is committed by other children and young people (Hackett, 2014). We call this peer sexual abuse.

Peer Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- physical and sexual abuse / sexual harassment and violence / emotional harm / on and offline bullying / teenage relationship abuse

2. What is the context?

Peer sexual abuse can happen in a range of settings, including: at school / at home / in public spaces / at parties / at a friend's house / online. It can take place in spaces which are supervised or unsupervised. Within a school context, for example, peer-on-peer sexual abuse might take place in spaces such as toilets, the playground and outdoor areas, corridors and when children are travelling to and from school (Contextual Safeguarding Network, 2020).

It should be recognised that the behaviour in question is harmful to both the perpetrator (who is a child) and the victim. Behaviour may be intimate or non-intimate.

3. Why is it important?

Young people can be confused about whether or not they have experienced peer sexual abuse. Reasons for this include:

Confusion about what constitutes 'normal' sexual activity / they don't know whether they gave consent (N.B no-one can consent to being abused) / they were using substances when the abuse took place / the abuse was carried out by a friend or partner / the abuse took place online; and/or they blame themselves for what happened.

Parents & professionals don't always know the most appropriate way to respond to children who display harmful sexual behaviour and/or who have experienced peer sexual abuse.

7. Further Reading

[Peer on peer abuse | Safeguarding Network - confidence in safeguarding](#)

[Protecting children from peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

Department for Education advice: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[What is peer-on-peer abuse? - schools, early years, further education and skills](#)

6. What should you do?

It's important that adults who work or volunteer with children can identify if sexualised behaviour becomes harmful or abusive, and respond proportionally to keep all the children involved safe. This also includes knowing how to proactively:

- Respond to disclosure or a concern raised
- Initiate a discussion with your safeguarding lead
- Take immediate action
- Make a referral when appropriate (for the victim and also perpetrator who may be a child in need).

Peer Sexual Abuse



4. What is the impact?

Experiencing peer sexual abuse can have a long-lasting negative impact on a child's wellbeing that can reach into adulthood. Effects can include:

- mental health issues – such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, self-harming
- challenging behaviour – such as substance misuse, sexualised behaviour, offending
- relationship problems – for example intimacy issues, having unstable relationships, unable to form or sustain friendships

5. Spotting the signs and symptoms

- absence from school or disengagement from school activities
- physical injuries / mental or emotional health issues
- becoming withdrawn – lack of self esteem / lack of sleep / alcohol or substance misuse
- changes in behaviour / inappropriate behaviour for age / abusive towards others

As with all safeguarding issues, peer on peer abuse can impact on children and young people without these characteristics.

For more local partnership information:

[Harmful Sexual Behaviour - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
[Child Abuse Campaign - Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

1 Background

Social media has revolutionised the way we connect with each other. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are now used by one in four people worldwide. Many young people have never known a world without instant access to social networking platforms, and this has transformed the way in which this generation interact and communicate with each other.

2 Why does it matter?

Adolescence and early adulthood is a critical time for social and emotional development, and so understanding the effects of social media on health at this stage is of particular importance. Whilst social media can be a hugely positive influence, it also has the potential for being a negative and destructive influence on mental well-being, particularly for children and young people.

3 Why does it matter?

Research suggests a typical teenager will check their phone on average 150 times per day and will take an average of 12 selfies before sharing 1, with just under 50% of young people also adding a filter to 'improve' their appearance. Posts on Social Media will therefore often present an 'idealised' view which creates unrealistic expectations.

7 Further Information

Please see the links below for more information about mental health and internet safety
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/mental-health/>
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/internet-safety/>
<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/new-out-of-hours-mental-health-advice-line-1/>

6 How to respond

Professionals need to be aware of both the positive and negative influences of social media. Do not be distracted by the technology, mental health concerns are a safeguarding issue.

Questions for professionals:

Do you routinely ask about social media use when assessing a child/family?

Do you talk to children about safe social media use and their broader online behaviour?

4 Key statistics

91% of 16-24 year olds use the internet for social networking: Rates of anxiety and depression in young people have risen 70% in the past 25 years: Social media use is linked with increased rates of anxiety, depression and poor sleep: Cyber bullying is a growing problem with 7 in 10 young people saying they have experienced it.

5 Positive experiences

Social networking offers young people an opportunity to understand, the health experiences of others. Sharing problems or issues with friends, peers and broader social networks can be met with positive reaction. Nearly seven in 10 teens report receiving support on social media during tough or challenging times. Social media can act as an effective platform for accurate and positive self-expression, letting young people put forward their best self.



<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/>

1 What is it?

..“the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.”

Working Together 2018

2 What is it?

Effective safeguarding is about vigilance. Organisations and individuals whose work brings them into contact with children and young people must have an awareness of safeguarding, abuse, neglect and maltreatment.

3 Why is it important?

There have been a number of cases over the years, where children have been seriously harmed or died. When these cases have been reviewed it has been shown that with better safeguarding processes the child may well have been protected.

7 Further Information

For more information about safeguarding:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/concerned-about-a-child/>

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/multi-agency-thresholds/>

6 How to respond

Receive - Listen actively

Reassure - ‘You’ve done the right thing by coming to me’,

Respond - Tell what you are going to do

Report - As soon as possible, to your Safeguarding Lead or the Integrated Front Door (0151 606 2008)

Record – facts not opinions



Safeguarding Children



<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk>

4 Types of abuse

Abuse falls into 4 categories:

Physical—hitting, biting, slapping

Emotional—belittling, name calling, ignoring

Neglect—lack of food, clothing, emotional or developmental support

Sexual—direct sexual contact, forming a sexual ‘relationship’ with a child.

5 Recognising signs

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect: behaviour changes, aggressive withdrawn or clingy; ill-fitting clothes, poor hygiene; problems at school, regularly missing from school; parents who are dismissive and non-responsive; children who are concerned for/ responsible for younger siblings.

1. 72 hours missing

Strategy meeting should be convened. Serious Notification Form sent to Local Authority. Multi-agency meetings should continue weekly if child continues to be missing. Press release discussed.

2. 3 missing episodes in 30 days

Case to be reviewed by IFD if no support in place. If case is in Early Help the Lead Professional should convene a Family Meeting to determine if existing plan is working.

If case is in Childrens Social Care there should be consideration for a Strategy Meeting or review of current plan

3. 9 missing episodes in 90 days

Case should be reviewed by IFD to see if it an open case.

If case is in Early Help the Lead Professional should convene a Family Meeting to determine if existing plan is working. Needs and risks should be identified and referred back to the IFD.

If case is in Childrens Social Care there should be consideration for a Strategy Meeting or review of current plan

Police MFH co-ordinator to be invited to all meetings

7. Return Home Interviews

Catch22 will endeavour to complete a return interview within 72hrs of the child being found and seen safe and well by Police. The return interview is sent to Police Missing from Home Coordinator, allocated social care and or IFD. These return interviews should inform the child's plan (EH, CiN, CP, CLA)

6. Catch22

For Wirral Looked after Children who are placed outside of the borough, it is the responsibility of the allocated social worker to inform Catch22 of this missing episode in order that they can carry out the return interview. Catch22 aim to reduce missing episodes with young people by offering direct work where appropriate.



4. Absent/Away from Placement

When a child or young person is identified as not being at a location they are expected to be, the reporting individual must take proactive steps to trace the child's whereabouts prior to contacting the police.

5. Absent/Away from Placement

Consider possible risks of CSE, substance misuse, family members where they have previously been removed from. A Care Planning meeting should be held if the child is persistently absent to ensure the child is safeguarded.

1 Background

Sexting means sending sexually explicit messages or images/videos. These can be sent by any messaging service and are often sent via social media. Sexting is sometimes known as 'trading nudes', 'dirties', and 'pic-for-pic'. Sexting is being increasingly used by young people as a 'pre-relationship' activity.

2 Why does it matter?

Sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. The young person is breaking the law if they: take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend; share an image of a child; store a video of a child, even if that child gave permission.

However as of January 2016 the police can choose to record a crime was committed but not take formal action if its not in the public interest.

3 Why does it matter?

Studies suggest that up to a third of 15 year olds have shared a nude or semi-nude image of themselves. Studies have also shown that 90% of those that have received a sext have subsequently shared it. Young people often perceive sexting as 'no big deal' but the consequences of sharing explicit images can be far-reaching.

4 Why does it matter?

When an image is shared online all control is lost and that image is in the public domain. This means that photos or videos which a young person may have shared privately could still be end up being shared between adults they don't know. These images have also been known to resurface later on in life and been used as blackmail or 'sextortion'.

5 Why does it happen?

There may be many reasons why a young person shares this kind of image. They may feel under pressure, or may feel it helps them fit in. They may trust the person they are sending it to, or love them. It may be an extension of adolescent 'risk-taking' behaviour, or been seen as 'just banter'.

7 Further Information

Please see the links below for more information about mental health and internet safety

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/sexting/>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/>
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/sexting-advice-professionals>
<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/sexting/>

6 How to respond

Professionals should:

Talk to children about safe social media use , listen without judgement.

Ensure your focus remains child-focused.

Report to the Police and Social Care any concerns particularly where the child is under 13 or particularly vulnerable, or where there is adult involvement.

Try to get the image removed by contacting the website or Internet Watch Foundation (IWF).



<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/>

1 What is it?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) refer to stressful or traumatic events that children and young people can be exposed to as they are growing up. ACEs range from experiences that directly harm a child, such as physical, verbal or sexual abuse, and physical or emotional neglect, to those that affect the environments in which children grow up, such as parental separation, domestic violence, mental illness, alcohol abuse, drug use or imprisonment.

2 What is it?

There is a distinction between 'normal' stressful life events, such as parental divorce or illness of a loved one, and adverse childhood experiences, very traumatic life events, such as being or seeing someone else physically or sexually abused. These are experiences that will often be associated with post-traumatic stress disorder.

3 Why it matters

The first UK study in Blackburn with Darwin (BwD; Bellis et al, 2014a) found that increasing ACEs were strongly associated with adverse behavioural, health and social outcomes across the life course. Further studies found that almost half of the general population reported at least one ACE and over 8% reported four or more.

7 What should we do?

- Think about how those experiences will have an impact on the child's healthy development and on their behaviours.
- Recognise the signs, and see beyond a child just 'acting out'.
- Try to help them become more grounded, give them choices and allow them to feel more in control.
- Understand that it is likely this will have an impact on any attachment for that child and there will be mistrust. We need to try and build a relationship with the child that is different to ones they have experienced previously.
- Finally, it is important to remember that ACEs tend to be passed from generation to generation.

6 What is the impact?

ACEs research shows that there is a strong dose-response relationship between ACEs and poor physical and mental health, chronic disease (such as type II diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; heart disease; cancer), increased levels of violence, and lower academic success both in childhood and adulthood.



4 Why it matters

When exposed to stressful situations, the "fight, flight or freeze" response floods our brain with corticotrophin-releasing hormones (CRH), which usually forms part of a normal and protective response that subsides once the stressful situation passes. However, when repeatedly exposed to ACEs, CRH is continually produced by the brain, which results in the child remaining permanently in this heightened state of alert and unable to return to their natural relaxed and recovered state.

5 What is the impact?

Children and young people who are exposed to ACEs have increased – and sustained – levels of stress. In this heightened neurological state a young person is unable to think rationally and it is physiologically impossible for them to learn or develop in the same way a child not having these experiences will.

1 Background

This case was considered by the WSCP Case Review committee following removal of the 5 Anderson children as a result of neglect. The case did not meet the CSPR threshold but a multi-agency learning review was agreed.

2 Purpose of the review

The purpose of a learning review is to identify learning for the multi-agency partnership which will strengthen the safeguarding system. Beyond individual cases reviews also often provide a window into wider systems (ways of working/ processes) which may need to be changed.

3 Concerns

The family were first known to services when Jacob the oldest child was 3 months old. Concerns identified at that point were neglect and contact with maternal grandmother. Over the following 8 years all 5 children were managed across the thresholds with the main concern always being neglect.

7 Further Information

All learning is embedded in training. In addition the WSCP will be publishing a summary report of the findings.

For further information on Child Practice Safeguarding Reviews and Learning Reviews go to the WSCP website.

6 Learning

- Tools were under-utilised across the partnership, particularly the Graded Care Profile, and where assessment was started it was not completed
- Significant changes in structures in the LA impacted how services were delivered, meaning that documents were inaccessible to those involved with the family.



4 Key Practice Episodes

Analysis of the combined chronology revealed 3 Key Practice Episodes (KPE's). These KPEs helped frame the discussion at the learning review meeting:

- Effectiveness of Multi Agency Working
- Over-optimism in parents parenting ability
- Evidence based decision making

5 Learning

- The family would have benefitted from an extended period before services were withdrawn. It was evident that there was significant improvement in the quality of parenting when support was available.
- On a number of occasions workers escalated concerns. This was often not followed up and formal escalation procedures were not followed.

1 What is it?

Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside their home, either from adults or other young people.

2 Why it matters

Traditional approaches to protecting children/young people from harm have focussed on the risk of violence and abuse from inside the home, and don't always address the time that children/young people spend outside the home.

3 Why it matters

As children move from early childhood and into adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time socialising independently of their families. The nature of young people's relationships, that they form in these settings, inform the extent to which they encounter protection or abuse.

7 What should we do?

Identify the ways in which young people can change the social conditions where abuse has occurred, and encourage self-responsibility for making these changes. Engage with individuals and sectors who have a bearing on social contexts, ie shopkeepers, local policing, community leaders, to make environments safer.

6 What should we do?

A Contextual Safeguarding approach aims to disrupt harmful extra-familial contexts rather than move young people away from them. The approach seeks to identify the ways in which professionals, adults and young people can change the social conditions of environments in which abuse has occurred.



4 Peer relationships

Research tells us that peer relationships are increasingly influential during adolescence. If a young person forms friendships in contexts characterised by violence and/or harmful attitudes these relationships will be anti-social and unsafe.

5 What are the risks?

There are a wide range of potential risks where the prime cause of harm is outside of the family. This list isn't exhaustive but includes: peer on peer abuse; exploitation and online abuse; missing episodes; gang involvement; radicalisation; trafficking and modern slavery.

1 What is SFEF?

Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SFEF) is a new model for working with children, young people and their families across levels 3 and 4 (Team Around the Family, Child in Need and Child Protection) of the Wirral Continuum of Need.

2 The principles of SFEF

1. Understand the world of the child(ren).
2. Understand the world of the adults
3. Recognise family strengths as well as concerns.
4. Engage families in the change process.
5. Measure change through actions and interventions that lead to child-focused outcomes.

3 The lived experience

The focus of the model is on understanding how issues within the family affect the child's daily lived experience. After a referral is made the child is spoken to about their 'day' from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to sleep. In this process their thoughts and feelings will be explored.

7 The plan

The plan will identify: Recognised strengths of the family: What professionals are concerned about (what needs to change): Who is going to complete actions (and by when).

The plan will be reviewed regularly to measure positive changes to the lived experience of the child(ren).

4 Single assessment

All practitioners in contact with the family will then be asked to feed into a single assessment. In the case of Child in Need and Child Protection this will be done via Liquid Logic. This assessment is co-ordinated and analysed by the Social Worker. All practitioners and the family will see the final assessment before the first multi-agency meeting.

6 Traffic lights

Traffic lights will be used as an easy visual representation of levels of concern.

RED - developmental needs are not being met likely to cause significant harm to the child
AMBER - developmental needs are not being met may impact on the health and development of the child
GREEN - developmental needs are being met

5 Multi-agency meetings

The meeting room should be set up in a horseshoe shape with the focus being on the issues identified in the assessment, which are displayed at the front of the room. The focus of the discussion is then on how any issues will be addressed. The family are involved in this discussion with their views on concerns and strengths being explored.



1 What is it?

County Lines is the term commonly used to describe the approach taken by gangs and criminal networks to supply class A drugs from urban to suburban areas across the country, including market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines known as 'deal lines' or 'graft lines'.

2 How it works

Typically, the 'graft phone' is kept away from the area where the drugs are sold and a relay system is used to contact those acting as dealers. A local property which is often occupied by a vulnerable person is used as a base for the groups activities. The acquiring of the property is often by force or coercion and is known as 'cuckooing'.

3 Why it matters

Groups and Organised Crime Groups exploit children and teenagers to deal on their behalf. Children are seen as easily controlled and inexpensive to resource. These children will often fall into some form of debt to the group and this can lead to violence and assaults against them.

7 What should we do?

Be cautious with the language we use. Some language minimises the risks and reality of the child's situation, so professionals should avoid using such terms in their recording and conversations.
Use the County Lines and Exploitation Toolkit for guidance.
If a child or young person is at risk of harm or abuse please report it to the Integrated Front Door on **0151 606 2008**. In an emergency always dial **999**.

6 What are the signs?

Recognising a child who is being exploited means seeing changes in behaviour including; going missing from home or absent from school without explanation; mixing with new friends their parents don't know; experimental drug use, often cannabis; having more than one mobile phone; appearing nervous/scared/evasive/secretive; suffering injuries they can't explain; having tickets for train or coach travel.

4 Why it matters

The children involved often do not perceive themselves to be victims of exploitation, as they consider they have acted voluntarily. This is further complicated as the exploited children often receive cash or gifts/drugs from their abusers as a means to groom them.

5 Recognising vulnerability

There are several factors that will make a child more vulnerable to being exploited including:
Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household;
Drug or alcohol misuse; History of abuse ; Recent bereavement or loss; Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships;
Friends with children who are exploited; Lacking friends from the same age group; Living in residential care; Low self-esteem or self-confidence.



1 What is an escalation?

If you feel that a practitioner or an agency is not acting in the best interests of the child, young person or family, you have a responsibility to respectfully challenge the practitioner or agency, and escalate your concerns.

2 When would you escalate?

When working with practitioners from other agencies there will at times be differences of opinion or concerns about professional practice in relation to a child, young person or family. The new WSCB procedure outlines the escalation process including time scales and principles for resolution. There are 4 key stages to resolving multi-agency escalations.

3 Stage 1

- Initial attempts should be made **between workers** to resolve the issue
- If resolution cannot be achieved professionals must escalate to their **safeguarding lead and/or team manager**
- Take Action Within 24 Hours of Concern
- Record the escalation
- Notify the WSCB

7 Record keeping

- Agencies should record their use of the Escalation Procedure (Stages 1-3) and be able to report outcomes of escalations to the WSCB.
- The child's record should be updated
- The WSCB will keep a record of all escalations and outcomes at Stage 4, and may request information about the outcomes of escalations at Stages 2 and 3.

4 Stage 2

- The Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead should discuss the concerns/response with their opposite manager in the other agency.
- If resolution cannot be achieved professionals must notify their Senior Managers (or in the case of schools the Chair of Governors alongside the Head)
- WSCB to be notified if resolved

6 Stage 4

- The WSCB Chair will seek written representation, and may request a meeting with those involved.
- The WSCB Chair will make a recommendation on the most appropriate way to proceed and communicate this within 5 days of notification.

5 Stage 3

- The Senior Manager will escalate to the WSCB Board Representative who will arrange a meeting to seek resolution.
- If agreement cannot be achieved, the matter should be brought to the attention of the WSCB Business Manager who will refer the matter to the WSCB Chair.



7 Minute Briefing

Neglect

1. Background

Neglect is the most common reason for referral to Childrens Services. The definition of neglect is not as objective as other forms of abuse, and so relies on professional assessment.

2. What is it?

Professionals will often intervene with physical environment cases of neglect. However the the child will often see neglect in terms of emotional issues.

4. How to recognise it

Failure to provide: adequate food, shelter and clothing; adequate supervision; access to medical care; failure to protect from physical harm; unresponsive to child's emotional needs.

3. What is it?

Neglect is not a one off event but rather an accumulation of issues over time. It can happen to children of all ages including teenagers

5. Causes

In many cases the cause is recorded as either poor parental health (54%), domestic abuse (49%), substance misuse (49%), alcohol misuse (38%). This is unlikely to be a 'quick fix'.

6. Why it matters

Neglect can be fateful and affects the global development of children. Neglect can also affect longer term development with negative consequences for physical and mental health over the lifetime

7. Action

Look out for low level concerns and intervene early to assist families before crisis. Ensure you listen to the child's story. Complete an assessment to decide on assistance needed. Refer to targeted/social care.

7 Minute Briefing

Child Sexual Exploitation

1. Background

Child Sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of abuse that can happen to any child irrespective of social background.

This is an issue of abuse not a lifestyle choice. Children who are sexually exploited are the victims

Male victims are very under-reported.

2. What is it?

CSE often involves a child receiving 'something' e.g. gifts, money, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes etc. for performing sexual activities. Many young people will not see themselves as victims as they are led to believe they are making their own choices, but they aren't.

3. Why it matters?

Children who become exploited in this type of abuse face huge risks to their physical, psychological and emotional health.

Victims require long term intensive support.

The perpetrators are criminals and must be pursued through the courts

4. Categories of CSE

CSE can take various forms including: Online grooming; Gang exploitation; Boyfriend/girlfriend model; Party model; Street model; Peer Model

CSE offences always include an element of grooming – manipulating a child in order to exploit them.

5. Vulnerability

Factors that will make a child more vulnerable include; Missing from home; disengaged from education; feeling alienated from family; lack of friends/peers; mental health issues; criminality.

Victims will often become secretive and estranged from family and friends.

6. Local issues

Cases referred locally go to the MASCE for review.

Most recent statistics show; 81% of referrals are for girls; the majority of cases include an aspect of internet use.

Children who go missing are particularly vulnerable.

7. Action

Recognise the warning signs of CSE. Use the screening tool and consult if you have concerns.

Make a referral to the MASH team on 0151 606 2008. Complete a CSE 1 form. Document all activity.

Further info:
www.listentomystory.co.uk

7 Minute Briefing

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

1. What is Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

- HSB can be defined as : 'One or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. These can range from using sexually explicit words and phrases to full penetrative sex with other children or adults'.

2. HSB Behaviours

- HSB includes both contact and non- contact behaviours (e.g. grooming, sexting, taking pictures) and the young person has displayed a harmful behavioural threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate a victim.

3. Consent

- To give consent to sex or a sexual act a person must be 16 years old or over, understand, and be able to make a choice or change their mind. If a young person is under the age of 13 years, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 they cannot legally consent to any form of sexual activity.

4. Identifying HSB

- To help professionals to identify behaviour which might be harmful Brook have published a traffic light tool (available on the WSCB website)
- The tool provides a continuum of sexual behaviours from normal and healthy to harmful and provides a resource to identify, assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviours

5. Response to children displaying HSB

- Using guidance document and traffic light tool professionals assess whether behaviour is healthy, inappropriate or harmful
- Any inappropriate or harmful behaviour triggers completion of a request for services form and strategy meeting

6. Key Information

- Around 90% of children who engage in HSB are adolescent boys
- Common features amongst children who present with HSB are a history of multiple abuse and disadvantage, and having a learning disability
- Both perpetrators and victims must be viewed under safeguarding and child protection procedures

7. Useful Links

WSCB Multi-agency guidance:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/procedures/6-3-children-young-people-display-sexually-inappropriate-harmful-behaviour/>

Brook Traffic Light Tool:

<https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>

7 Minute Briefing *Private Fostering*

1. Background

Since the Childrens Act 2004 it has been a legal responsibility for Local Authorities to recognise, monitor and support any child in their area that is being 'privately fostered'.

2. What is Private Fostering?

This is an informal arrangement where a child up to the age of 16 (or 18 if registered with a disability) is living with someone not classed as family under the Childrens Act 1989, for a period of 28 days or more.

3. Why it matters?

It is believed a lot of children are living in these circumstances unrecognised which could lead to abuse.

Victoria Climbié was brought into the country by a distant relative who went on to abuse and murder her.

4. Considerations

The period of the arrangement could be broken by a brief visit home may still be classed as Private Fostering. So does not need to be 28 days consistently.

The parents will still hold Parental Responsibility and will need to be consulted when decisions about care are made.

5. Responsibility of the Private Fosterer

To notify the Local Authority before entering into any arrangements.

To agree to checks and assessment being made.

To agree the terms of the care with the parents or whoever holds parental responsibility.

6. Responsibility of Local Authority

Complete a Child in Need Assessment of suitability.

Complete checks on the adults in the household, DBS, Criminal Records.

Assign an IRO to undertake regular reviews of the circumstances.

7. Action

Recognise when a child you are working with may be in this situation, or about to be.

Make a safeguarding referral to the MASH Team on 0151 606 2008.

Give as much information about the child and the circumstances as possible.

7 Minute Briefing

Domestic Abuse

1. Background

Domestic abuse can affect anyone from any background. Whilst the majority of cases are male on female violence there has been an increase of female on male violence and violence in same sex relationships.

2. What is it?

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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'.

3. Types of abuse

Domestic abuse can take the following forms: Physical/sexual abuse and violence; psychological abuse and name-calling; financial abuse and control of money in the house; emotional abuse and emotional blackmail.

4. Why it matters?

In 90% of cases children are in the same or the next room when the incident occurs. They may be emotionally distressed witnessing abuse, or physically harmed themselves.

5. Local issues

The highest risk age for women is between 25-45. The highest risk of witnessing domestic abuse is in children aged under 5. The most referrals come from the Birkenhead area .

6. How to respond

Make sure that any immediate harm is managed. Inform the police if risk of harm is imminent. Discuss safety planning with the victim. Ensure safety of children is paramount.

7. Action

Recognise warning signs. Complete the DASH form with the adult victim (over 16) and the RIM form with the children. Make a referral to the MASH team. Refer to MARAC in those cases where risk is high.

Early Help - On a Page

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/what-is-early-help/>

Early Help & Prevention Offer	All People	Some People	Specific People	
	Global Prevention	Focused Prevention	Targeted Early Support	Reactive Intervention
What are we aiming to do?	Provide education and encouragement to empower children, young people and families	Prevent anticipated need arising by supporting children, young people and families	Meet needs and reduce the likelihood of referral to Children's Services	Deliver focused activity to reduce the need for Children's Social Care intervention
Who?	All children and young people	Children and young people belonging to a vulnerable group	Children and young people at level 2 on the continuum of need	Children and young people at level 3 on the continuum of need
How will we know about them?	Universal coverage with opportunity for self-identification/selection	Identification through universal access, data analysis and insight	Professional identification and referral to Community Matters	Professional identification and referral to Family Matters and/or Children's Services
What will we do	Partnership approach to providing a wide range of activities, information, advice and guidance	Partnership approach to providing a wide range of preventative activity, signposting and guidance	Partnership Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan	LA Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan
Who will do this?	Partnership offer: published on WSCB website, the Hive Youth Zone, Healthy Child Programme, 3 and 4 year old funding for early education LA Services: Children's Centre Universal Offer, Play Services Youth Hubs and Hubs, Health Services in Schools	Partnership offer: published on WSCB website, 2 year old funding for early education LA Services: Early Years Family Workers, Children's Centre Groups, Health Services in Schools 1:1s and Parent Education, Creative Youth Development, Alcohol and Substance Education	Community Matters services: WEB, WIRED, Safer Wirral Hub, Caritas, Fender Community Hub, The Open Door Centre LA Services: Early Years Portage Team, Detached Youth Work, Youth Projects- GIRLS, LADS, Life Skills	Family Matters services: Targeted Family Support, Pre-Birth & Infant Team, Adolescent Response Team, Family Group Conferencing LA Services: Alcohol & Substance Misuse Work, Counselling,
How? Methods/ model?	Range of activities provided through the Children's Centre What's On guides, guided play sessions; open access to youth hubs and clubs with a range of activities, advice and guidance, drop in sessions for all secondary school pupils	Range of parenting programmes, 1:1 support, peer support, parent education sessions, theatre and arts activity, briefings, multi-agency workshops, partnership with schools	Partnership Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan underpinned by SFEF Community Matters services: parenting, mental health support, advocacy, family support, debt advice, health & wellbeing, whole-family approach	Early Help Episode: Lead Worker, EHAT, Family Plan underpinned by SFEF Family Matters services: parenting, reducing conflict, family mediation, 1:1 support; 1:1 nurture programme, 1:1 gateway programme, housing advice, whole-family support plan, co-ordination of multi-agency approach
How will we know the impact?	Data on engagement: registrations, reach, contact, sustained contact, evaluations from children, young people and families	Increase in early help activity, reduction in contacts to Children's Social Care, evaluations from children, young people and families	Reduction in contacts to Children's Social Care, cases closing with needs met, family evaluations	Reduction in referrals to Children's Social Care, progress of step downs, cases closing with needs met, family evaluations

Children, young people and families are at the heart of our services - We will ensure that we engage with children, young people and families to improve and co-produce future service provision.

School Record of Safeguarding Training:

Type of Training:	Date completed:	Next due date:
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Due every 2 years)	17/09/2024	September 2026
Deputy DSL's (Due every 2 years)	17/09/2024	September 2026
Whole School Staff Refresher/updates (Annual)	September 2025	September 2026
Safer Recruitment Training (Due every 5 years)	March 2025 (Headteacher & SBM)	March 2030
Operation Encompass: Key Adult Briefing	April 2024 (Headteacher / DSL)	April 2026

Governor Training

September 2025
(Designated Governor for
Safeguarding)

September 2026

All Governors

DSL Prevent Training Update (for DSLs to disseminate to ALL staff)

January 2024

January 2026

DSL