



STAMFORD

**STAMFORD SCHOOL POLICY ON
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE**

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KEY EXTERNAL CONTACT DETAILS

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Referral Line	TEL: 01522 554674 EMAIL: LSCP_LADO@lincolnshire.gov.uk
Local Authority Children's Social Services	TEL: 01522 782111 OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM TEL: 01522 782333
Support and Advice about Extremism	Police PREVENT ADVICE LINE: 0800 011 3764 EMERGENCY: 999 NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER: 101 EMAIL: ctp-em-prevent-referral@lincs.police.uk Department for Education NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER: 020 7340 7264 EMAIL: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	ADDRESS: Weston House 42 Curtain Road London EC2A 3NH TEL: 0800 028 0285 EMAIL: help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Report Abuse in Education Advice Line	TEL: 0800 136 663 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@dbb.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
Independent Schools Inspectorate	TEL: 0207 6000 100 EMAIL: concerns@isi.net

KEY SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

Nominated Safeguarding Governor	NAME : Emilia Wawrzkowicz EMAIL: etwawrz@doctors.org.uk
Stamford School Designated Safeguarding Leads ("DSL") and Deputy Designed Safeguarding Leads ("DDSLs")	<u>DSL</u> NAME: Ms. Anna Kennedy JOB TITLE: Assistant Head Safeguarding (Safeguarding and Clinical Services) EMERGENCY TEL: 07519 328689 EMAIL: akkennedy@ses.lincs.sch.uk <u>Deputy DSLs</u> NAME: Mrs. Katie Dexter JOB TITLE: Deputy Head Pastoral EMAIL: kldexter@ses.lincs.sch.uk NAME : Mrs. Alex Colley JOB TITLE : Assistant Head Pastoral EMAIL: alcolley@ses.lincs.sch.uk NAME: Mr. Ben Morris JOB TITLE: Head of Sixth EMAIL: brmorris@ses.lincs.sch.uk

	NAME : Mr. Leigh Ware JOB TITLE : Director of Activities EMAIL: lhware@ses.lincs.sch.uk NAME : Mrs. Nisha Odedra JOB TITLE : Teacher of Philosophy and Ethics EMAIL: nodedra@ses.lincs.sch.uk
Stamford Junior School Designated Safeguarding Leads ("DSL") and Deputy Designed Safeguarding Leads ("DDSLs")	<u>DSL & EYFS</u> NAME: Mrs. Claire Hughes JOB TITLE: Deputy Head Pastoral TEL: 01780 484473 EMAIL: clhughes@ses.lincs.sch.uk <u>DDSLs</u> NAME : Mrs. Sarah Buttress JOB TITLE: Deputy Head Academic TEL: 01780 484400 EMAIL: slbuttress@ses.lincs.sch.uk NAME : Mrs. Claire Stratford JOB TITLE : SENCo TEL : 01780 484426 EMAIL : clstratford@ses.lincs.sch.uk NAME : Mr. Daniel Thacker JOB TITLE : Teacher/Houseparent TEL : 01780 484400 EMAIL : dthacker@ses.lincs.sch.uk
Head of Stamford School	Mr. Chris Seal EMAIL: cps@ses.lincs.sch.uk
Head Stamford Senior School	Mr. Chris Smith EMAIL: cwsmith@ses.lincs.sch.uk
Head Stamford Junior School	Mr. Matthew O'Reilly EMAIL: moreilly@ses.lincs.sch.uk

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to:

- Stamford Schools (Stamford Senior School and Stamford Junior School) ("the School") which includes the EYFS setting
- any individual or organisation using school premises, inside or outside of term time for the purposes of running activities for children.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on the School website.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2026) ("KCSIE")
- *KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (September 2018)
- *KCSIE also provides links to various toolkits and additional advice and support*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*
- *Children Missing Education* (September 2025)
- *Behaviour in Schools* (February 2024)
- *Digital and technology standards in schools and colleges* (April 2026)
- *After school clubs, community activities, and tuition — safeguarding guidance for providers* (February 2026)
- *Section 3 of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers* (July 2026) ("EYFS Framework")
- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (August 2026)
- *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (December 2023) ("Prevent"). Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:
- *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (June 2015)
- *Relationships education, relationships, and sex education (RSE) and health education* (July 2025).
- *The Charity Commission guidance Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and Trustees* (June 2022)

This policy also considers the procedures and practice of local and neighbouring counties children's safeguarding partnerships as part of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements:

- Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Board
- Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Board
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

For the purposes of this policy, a child is considered to be any person of school age although for young people between 18 and 19 years old, discretion and autonomy should be taken into consideration.

The School has a duty to consider at all times the best interests of the pupil and to take action to enable all pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. The School adopts a 'whole school' approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school, and ensuring that, safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Definitions of safeguarding and types and signs of abuse

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of KCSiE (2024) as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect.

Please refer to Appendix 1 of this policy for further detail of the types of abuse and possible signs of abuse, as well as further information regarding specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal and/or sexual exploitation.

Children who are questioning their gender

When supporting a gender questioning child, the School will not initiate any action. The School will take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences.

Staff should remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs. The DSL will be involved in all cases where a child is questioning their gender. Staff will not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the School and a child's parents or carers have been involved. Parents will be involved in the vast majority of cases. In the rare circumstances where involving parents or carers would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them, the DSL will determine what action is needed to safeguard the child, before parents or carers are contacted or any decisions are taken.

The School does not permit children to use toilets or changing rooms designated for the opposite biological sex. Where safety requires single-sex sport, this applies with no exceptions, including for gender-transitioning pupils, and alternative facilities may be considered without compromising single-sex provision. Staff should not make individual decisions about access alone — all such matters are referred to the DSL. Further guidance on single-sex spaces, sport, and boarding accommodation is set out in Part two of KCSIE (September 2026).

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

If Staff¹ suspect or hear any 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 act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

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. The Governing Body recognises the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies, including ensuring arrangements for sharing information within the School and with local authority children's social care, the safeguarding partners and other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required. Fears regarding sharing information under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation ("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 nor 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").

The Governing Body will ensure that Staff understand the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, including being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data' understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows the sharing of special category personal data, including without consent where there is good reason to do so. For example, information may be shared without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent; and gaining consent would place a child at risk not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test is met.

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

¹ For the purposes of this policy "Staff" includes employees, agency staff, supply staff, workers, self-employed contractors working at the School, employees of Holroyd Howe, volunteers, and Governors.

- 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
- be aware that the individual may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and speak to the DSL if they have concerns
- determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

All concerns, discussions, and decision rationale (together with reasons) made under these procedures should be recorded on the School's electronic reporting system, Myconcern. This will help if/when responding to any complaint about the way a case has been handled.

The record 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, the decision reached and the outcome.

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 record should be factual and contain direct speech where applicable. Staff should never record their own opinion unless being made in a professional capacity i.e., clinical opinion.

The 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 set out in Parts one and two of *KCSIE*.

The DSL should keep record of the rationale for any decisions made.

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 a DDSL).

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure the student's wishes and feelings are considered 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, which 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 student/s 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 absent or goes missing from education care or from home
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- 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 or exploitation
- 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
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending

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.

Where a child's needs go beyond community-based early help, the School will consider whether a targeted, multi-disciplinary Family Help assessment is required, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

In the first instance, Staff who consider that a pupil may benefit from early help should discuss this with the School's DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership referral threshold document. 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 student's situation does not appear to be improving.

What Staff should do if they have concerns about a child

If Staff 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 or their deputy 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 act 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.

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

If Staff 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 decide 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.

The School's Local Safeguarding Children Executive is the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP). A full copy of their local procedures can be found on the LSCP website.

What Staff should do if a child is seen as at risk of radicalisation

Staff should follow the School's normal referral processes when there are concerns about children who may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism, as set out above. This may include a Prevent and/or Channel referral or referral to children's social care depending on the level of risk. However, if Staff have concerns that there is an immediate/significant risk of a child being drawn into terrorism they must call 999 and/or make an immediate telephone referral to the LSCP. Non-urgent advice and support can also be sought from:

Prevent Advice Line: (tel) 0800 011 3764

Lincolnshire Police Prevent team : (email) ctp-em-prevent-referral@lincs.police.uk

Department for Education: (tel) 020 7340 7264 (email) counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

Any support delivered through the Channel Programme must be with consent from the individual.

The School, in recognition that students may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism or other forms of extremism, carries out appropriate risk assessments (following consultation with local partners, such as the police) of the potential risk in the local area. Such risk assessments are discussed with the Head, DSL, and Safeguarding Governor to ensure the School's safeguarding arrangements are sufficiently robust to help prevent and protect children from being drawn into terrorism and are regularly revised.

What Staff should do if they discover an act of Female Genital Mutilation ("FGM")

Teachers have a statutory duty to personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the member of Staff has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. All staff are referred to Appendix 1 of this policy for the procedure to be followed where they suspect that a pupil may be at risk of FGM.

What Staff should do if they are concerned that children are at risk from, or involved with serious violent crime

All Staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

If Staff have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the DSL to agree a course of action, although Staff can make a direct referral to children's social care.

Staff must report any concern about a child carrying or using a weapon, or expressing intent to do so, to the DSL immediately. The DSL should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan and, where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict. Practical guidance on evidenced support is available from the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF).

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 Department for Digital, Culture, Media & sport / 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 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, whether they have been referred externally or not. The School 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.

What Staff should do if a child is absent from education

Children who are absent from education, particularly persistently, can be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including abuse, neglect, exploitation and child sexual and/or criminal exploitation, particularly county lines. It is therefore important that the School's response to such absence supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of them being absent in the future. The School's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education are set out in the Children Absent from Education and Attendance policy. Further detail can also be found at Appendix 1 of this policy.

Where reasonably possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each student to provide the School with additional options to contact a responsible adult particularly when a child absent from education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

The School will report to Lincolnshire County Council, a student who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent from school without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

What Staff should do if a child needs a social worker (Children in Need and Child Protection Plans)

A social worker is a trained professional who works with all types of vulnerable people, groups, and communities to help them learn to live better lives. Social workers aim to create change and encourage the resilience of individuals, families, and communities.

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect, exploitation and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

There are different threshold levels of issue a member of staff may encounter:

Universal concern

Where possible, there will be a conversation with the DSL to agree a course of action, although any Staff member can make a referral to children's social care. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and will be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Early help

The DSL will support the Staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. If early help and or other support is appropriate the case will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving. Staff should take into consideration the feelings and wishes of the pupils, wherever possible, their age, family circumstances and wider community context. (Contextual Safeguarding)

Child in Need (CIN)

A Child in Need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired without the provision of services. Specialist services may be a single provision, for example a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school or may need multi-agency support. For some children, an holistic assessment of need by a social worker is required to decide what ongoing multi- agency services and support are needed to keep them safe, healthy, and well.

Child in immediate danger

A referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral, parental consent for referrals is not required to statutory agencies. Where referrals are not made by the DSL the DSL should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made. Reporting child abuse to your local council directs you to your local children's social care contact number.

What Staff should do if a child requires mental health support

The School has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its pupils. 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.

Staff can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. Staff can access the School Counsellors and Nurses for advice and guidance. More information can be found in the DfE *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* guidance. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to

support school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience among young people.

What Staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another Staff member

At Stamford, staff are encouraged to be vigilant and discuss matters they are concerned about that may have safeguarding implications. This might include things they have seen or read online. If Staff have safeguarding concerns about another member of staff, they must follow the procedure set out in the Low Level Concerns policy (see below)

What Staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices in the School

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 policy. 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 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. Contact details for the NSPCC helpline can be found on the Key Contacts page at the start of this policy.

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

Child on child abuse

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), abuse within intimate partner relationships between peers, physical abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm), initiation/hazing type violence and rituals, upskirting, sexting, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes, sexual assault, gender-based issues, sexual behaviours including child on child 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). It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

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.

The School takes a zero-tolerance approach, and 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.

This category of abuse now explicitly includes harassment and violence between pupils, not solely sexual violence and sexual harassment. Physical aggression, intimidation, and targeted harassment between pupils sit under the same reporting framework and the same low threshold for recording as sexual harm. Staff do not need to determine which category behaviour falls into before recording it — the DSL will assess this once reported.

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 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 student 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 are three times more likely to be abused by their peers, can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to peer-on-peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The School will consider extra pastoral support for those children. 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 recognises that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and are alert to the potential for child-on-child abuse. The Stamford School Boarding policy and individual boarding house handbooks set out procedures for responding to issues in boarding accommodation. The School will comply with its obligations as set out in the National Minimum Standards in relation to safeguarding at all times.

The School takes the following steps to minimise the risk of child on child abuse details of which can be found in the Anti-Child-On-Child Abuse Policy Including Youth Produced Sexual Imagery Policy

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:

- A student against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation.
- The School may take advice from the police and/or local authority.
- The investigation of such allegations will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the alleged victim and perpetrator(s).

- If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the police and local authority, 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 police and/or local authority
- The School will have regard to the procedures set out in *KCSIE* at all times.

The victim may ask the School not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. Advice should be sought from the DSL or DDSL who should consider parents or carers should normally be informed unless doing so would put the victim at greater risk. Should a child be considered at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care; and whether a crime has been committed. Ultimately, the DSL or DDSL will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

The police may be informed of any harmful sexual behaviours which are potentially criminal in nature, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, and/or genitalia. **Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults will be passed to the police.** Where a report has been made to the police, the School will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to Staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. 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 Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership referral process.

Sexting

Despite all the warnings and precautions, it is likely that some pupils will still become involved in "sexting" incidents.

The School's first and foremost priority is to do no further harm to the student victim. The School's investigation should be conducted with the outmost sensitivity for the student's mental wellbeing and regard for his or her privacy. The School must attempt to diffuse a quick moving situation in which the image can be spread to hundreds of other people in mere seconds.

There may be a multitude of reasons why a pupil has engaged in "sexting" – it may be a romantic/sexual exploration scenario, or it may be due to coercion.

The School will follow the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and 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(s) and perpetrator(s)) will be treated as being at risk, and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. Victims will be supported by the School pastoral team 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 Assessment

Risk Assessment Management Plans ("RAMPs") 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 School will explain to the child in a way that avoids alarming or distressing them that the law is in place to protect children rather than to criminalise them. The School will consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. The School acknowledges that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s). The DSL will consider the risks posed to students 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), and School transport. 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 consider intra familial harms and whether any support for siblings is necessary following an incident.

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

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.

False or malicious allegations

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 Head will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it in accordance with the School's Promoting Good Behaviour/Expulsion policy.

DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS MADE ABOUT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS AND TRAINEE TEACHERS)

The School's procedures for managing concerns or allegations against Staff follows DfE statutory guidance and local authority arrangements and applies when Staff have (or are alleged to have):

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, 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 or children 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

In this section reference to 'allegations' also covers concerns. Allegations that do not meet the above harm test should be dealt with using the School's procedure for handling low level concerns set out in the Stamford School Staff Low Level Concerns policy and must be recorded on Confide.

LADO referrals

Allegations against a member of staff 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.

If an allegation is made against anyone working with children in the School, before contacting the LADO, the School will conduct a basic enquiry in line with local procedures to establish the facts in order to determine whether there appears to be any foundation to the allegation. The School should not undertake their own investigation of the allegation(s) without prior consultation with the LADO or, in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations.

When dealing with an allegation 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.

Allegations which appear to meet the above reporting criteria are to be reported straight away to the Head. Where the Head is absent or is the subject of the allegation, reports should be made

to the Chair of Governors. Where the Head is the subject of the allegation, they must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the Chair of Governors and LADO.

The Head should immediately discuss the allegation with the LADO and consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. Where the Head 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 immediately.) All discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child(ren) agreed. The LADO 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. The DSL may be informed of any allegation and is responsible for ensuring the child is not at risk.

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 LADO and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the LADO to make a referral to children's social care.

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 LADO, and if appropriate, the police and/or children's social care. Subject to any objection, the Head 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 Head 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.

The Head 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. The following alternative arrangements should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- redeployment within the School so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- redeploying to alternative work in the School so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, but this decision should only be made if it is in the best interest of the

child, or children concerned and takes accounts of their views. It should be made making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or,

- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension, this will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation.

Allegations against external providers

Where allegations are received concerning incidents involving individuals or an organisation, when the School's premises are being used by external providers, the DSL will be informed and follow the Stamford Endowed Schools Safeguarding procedures for reporting concerns to the LADO.

Suspension

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 member of the School community 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 LADO and KCSIE when making a decision about suspension (including with respect to considering alternatives). 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. The Head will also record the rationale and justification for the suspension, including what alternatives were considered and why they were rejected.

Where a member of boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation, the Head will consider whether arrangements for alternative accommodation away from children should be made.

Investigation

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and the Head should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The LADO will provide advice and guidance to the School to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out. 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.

The Head 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.

The Head will monitor the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process. The outcome of the investigation of an allegation will record whether it is substantiated (sufficient evidence to prove it), unsubstantiated (insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), false (sufficient evidence to disprove it), malicious (sufficient evidence to disprove it and that there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation) or unfounded (to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made).

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.

The Head 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. 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).

On conclusion of the case, there will be a review of the case 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. Learning lessons where the allegation is concluded to be either, unfounded, false, malicious, or unsubstantiated, the case manager (and if they have been involved, the LADO) should consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if improvements can be made.

Where an individual is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had the individual not left, including when they are suspended, redeployed to work that is not regulated activity, are dismissed, or have resigned, and the individual has engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults, and/or satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults, and/or been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, the School will make a referral to the DBS.

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 appropriate, the School will advise staff being investigated to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support.

Where initial discussions lead to no further action, the Head and the LADO 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 and a copy will only be provided to the individual concerned. The information to be kept on file includes a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcomes, and a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference. All records should be retained until the accused has reached ordinary pension age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer.

Allegations proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded, or malicious will not be included in employer references. 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 School's Promoting Good 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.

In cases where there are concerns or allegations of abuse, the School will make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission when, in line with the Commission's guidelines, it is deemed appropriate to do so.

DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS ABOUT SUPPLY TEACHERS AND CONTRACTORS

The School's procedures for managing allegations against employed staff above also apply to staff not directly employed by the School, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business ('the agency'). The 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 the School first, the School must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS ABOUT ORGANISATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS USING SCHOOL PREMISES

The School may receive an allegation or concern relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers running extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, the School will follow its safeguarding policy and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Where services or activities at the School are provided under the direct supervision or management of school staff, this policy applies in relation to any safeguarding concerns or allegations. Where services or activities are not under the direct supervision or management of the School, the School will seek assurance that any individual or organisation has appropriate

safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, and will inspect these as needed. The School will expect providers to comply with the DfE guidance After school clubs, community activities, and tuition (safeguarding guidance for providers), and will seek assurance in this regard.

The School has arrangements in place for the use of school premises for non-school activities, including the availability of the DSL or DDSL and how they can be contacted.

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

Stamford Staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report any matters they are worried about that may have safeguarding implications. This might be something they have seen or heard online. A low-level concern is any concern 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.

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 operates a separate Stamford School Staff Low-Level Concerns Policy which enables all staff to understand how to share concerns – no matter how small – about their own or another member of Staff's behaviour.

The Staff Code of Conduct seeks 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.

The procedure for sharing confidentially any such concerns is set out in the Low-Level Concerns Policy. The Head is the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns.

Staff must share all concerns with the DSL or via Confide, 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 referred to the Head. Where a low-level concern is raised about the Stamford Junior School Head, it should be referred to the Stamford School Head. Should a concern be raised about the Stamford School Head, it should be referred to the Chair of Governors and should a concern be raised about the Chair of Governors, it must be referred to the LADO.

The number, nature and themes of all low-level concerns will be reported back to the governing body on at least a termly basis and will form part of the safeguarding governance requirement.

Self referral

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.

Concerns raised by third parties

If a concern is raised by a third party, the Head 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 using Confide. 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 in line with the Stamford School Retention Schedule.

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 an 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 LADO.

Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency or a contractor, the individual's employer will be notified about the concern, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If the School is in any doubt as to whether a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, the Head will consult with the LADO and take a more collaborate decision-making approach.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

The School is committed to safer recruitment processes to create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in the School whilst deterring and preventing people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities, within the School.

The Crime and Policing Act 2026 has removed the previous 'supervision exemption' from the definition of regulated activity. Any person volunteering in a role involving teaching, training, instructing or supervising children on more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or overnight, is now in regulated activity and requires an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, regardless of the level of supervision in place. Staff involved in engaging volunteers should check DBS status with HR or the DSL before a volunteer begins any such role.

All members of staff at the School - including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches - are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work; for example, right to work checks, additional overseas checks (if necessary), verifying identity, taking up references, checking work history and confirming medical fitness for the role. Shortlisted candidates are also informed that online searches will be carried out as part of the recruitment process.

For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the School may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

Full details of the School's safer recruitment procedures for checking the suitability of staff, Governors and volunteers to work with children and young people is set out in the School's Staff Recruitment policy.

The School's protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or pupils themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised is set out in the Stamford School Visitors Procedure.

The School's procedures for managing contractors attending the School site can be found in the Stamford School Visitors Procedure.

MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING

The Senior School DSL

The Stamford School's DSL is Ms Anna Kennedy who is a member of the senior leadership team.

The Senior School DDSLs

Mrs. Katie Dexter, Mrs Alex Colley, Mr. Ben Morris, Mr Leigh Ware and Mrs. Nisha Odera are the Stamford School deputy designated safeguarding leads (DDSLs) and the persons to whom reports should be made in the absence of Anna Kennedy.

The Junior School DSL

The Stamford Junior School's and EYFS DSL is Mrs. Claire Hughes who is member of the senior leadership team.

The Junior School DDSLs

Mrs. Sarah Buttress, Mr. Dan Thacker and Mrs. Claire Stratford are the Stamford Junior School deputy designated safeguarding leads (DDSLs) and the person to whom reports should be made in the absence of the Claire Hughes.

The DSL and DDSL's contact details can be found on the Key Contacts page at the start of this policy.

The DSL's role is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the School. The DSL's responsibility is to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the School, to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies, refer incidents to third parties (including the local authority children's services, the DBS, Channel and the police) where appropriate, to support staff in carrying out their safeguarding duties and to monitor the effectiveness of the School's policies and procedures in practice. The DSL works with the Governors to review and update the School's safeguarding policy.

Where a pupil leaves the School, including for in-year transfers, the DSL will also ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school (separately from the main pupil file) 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. The DSL will ensure secure transit and obtain confirmation of receipt. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school.

The DSL regularly reviews the School's and their own practices and concerns about welfare and safeguarding matters. This includes the personal and professional duty of all staff to report

welfare and safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or in the absence of action, directly to local children's services.

During term time, the DSL or a DDSL will always be available in person (during school hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If a DSL or DDSL is not available in person, they can be contacted using the emergency DSL mobile number: 07519 328689. For out of hours/out of term activities, the DSL or DDSL can be contacted using the emergency DSL mobile number.

The DSL should liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together in Education. *"NPCC - When to call the police"* can assist the DSL or DDSL understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do. If the School has questions about any police investigation, it will ask the police. The DSL will also be responsible for liaising with the school nurses and school counsellors and relevant CAHMS service where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health. The DSL should be confident as to what local specialist support is available to support all children involved in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support when required.

Whilst the Head should ensure that the policies and procedures adopted, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation, are understood and followed by all staff, and the Governors are ultimately responsible for ensuring staff are competent, supported and regularly reviewed in relation to safeguarding, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility should not be delegated.

Full details of the DSL's role can be found at Annex C of KCSIE.

TRAINING

Induction and training are in line with advice from KCSIE and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

All Staff and Governors

All new Staff and Governors will be provided with induction reading and training that includes:

- the child protection safeguarding policy (including the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse);
- the role and identity of the DSLs and any DDSLs
- the Stamford School Promoting Good Behaviour policy
- the Stamford School Anti-bullying Policy
- the Stamford School Colleague Code of Conduct
- the Stamford School Whistleblowing policy
- the Staff ICT Acceptable Use policy
- the Stamford School Absent from Education and Attendance policy;

Copies of the above documents are provided to all staff during induction.

All staff are also required to:

- Read at least Part one of KCSIE and confirm that they have done so. Each time Part One of KCSIE is updated by the Department for Education, Staff will be updated on the changes during the September INSET or if mid-year, in a safeguarding update.
- Understand key information contained in Part one of KCSIE. The School will ensure Staff understanding by providing assessment and scenario-based training.
- Receive training in safeguarding and child protection regularly, in line with advice from the LSCP. Training will include online safety and harmful sexual behaviours (including child on child sexual violence and harassment). It will also include Prevent awareness training to equip staff to raise concerns appropriately by ensuring all staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify children susceptible of being drawn into terrorism; are able to challenge extremist ideas; and know how to refer children and young people for further help.

- Undertake regular informal updates, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, including online. The School provides these via weekly DSL updates, weekly briefings and termly INSET.

The Governing Body will ensure that all Governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the School are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

The Governing Body are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR, and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Under the Human Rights Act 1998, it is unlawful for the School to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Convention. Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach conventions set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Convention. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

DSL and DDSLs

The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL.

The DSL and DDSLs receive updated child protection training at least every two years to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This includes local inter-agency working protocols, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, identifying children at risk of radicalisation, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children, training in the local authority approach to *Prevent* duties and harmful sexual behaviours. Further details of the required training content for the DSL and DDSLs are set out in Annex C of *KCSIE*.

In addition to their formal training, the DSL's knowledge and skills are updated at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. In particular, the School will support the DSL and DDSLs in developing their knowledge and skills to understand the views of children including to encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes, as well as having an awareness of the difficulties children may face in approaching staff with a disclosure.

OVERSIGHT OF SAFEGUARDING, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The school Safeguarding Governor is Dr. Emilia Wawrzkowicz and is the board-level lead designated to take a lead in relation to responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements in the School. She is a member of the Governing Body.

The School considers its obligation to review safeguarding practices a matter of its everyday concerns. A review of the School's child protection policies takes place at least annually, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation, including lessons learnt. The School has a dedicated Safeguarding Committee and regular Governor visits that create the means and mechanism for the annual review. The School draws on the expertise of staff, including the DSLs, in shaping the School's safeguarding arrangements and policies.

The School's safeguarding policies and procedures should be transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents, and carers.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the School will work with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

THE SCHOOL'S ARRANGEMENTS TO FULFIL OTHER SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching children how to keep safe Online

The Governing Body ensures that all pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through the Pastoral Curriculum (PHSE and RSE) to help children to adjust their behaviours, both inside and outside of School, in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation. This includes teaching pupils about the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet, and the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults. The School recognises that a "one size fits all" approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

Internet safety (including when children are online at home) is an integral part of the School's Pastoral and ICT Curriculum

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

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.

Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Filtering and Monitoring

The School has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online when using the School's IT system.

Day to day management of filtering and monitoring systems requires the specialist knowledge of both safeguarding and IT staff to be effective.

The effectiveness of the School's filtering and monitoring provision must be reviewed at least once every academic year. This review will be carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the DSL and IT support, and will include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations. A record of these checks will be kept and made available to governors as part of safeguarding oversight.

The DSLs take lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which include overseeing and acting on:

- filtering and monitoring reports
- safeguarding concerns
- checks to filtering and monitoring systems

The School's systems are supported by IT Service providers:

- DNSWatchGO (Safe Search Enforcement, DNS Sink Hole Protection, Adult Material and Extremism Catch All);
- Watchguard (Web Filtering, App Control, TLS/HTTPS filtering, Gateway Protection);
- Senso (Safeguarding Monitoring, Teams Monitoring, Classroom Management);
- Microsoft 365 (Device Management via Intune, Advanced Threat Protection, Defender, and End Points, Zero Trust and MFA)

Such systems aim to reduce the risk of children being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful materials online (content risk); reduce the risk of children being subjected to harmful online interaction with others including commercial advertising and grooming (contact risk); restrict access to online risks such as online gambling, phishing or financial scams (commerce risk); and help manage online behaviour that can increase a child's likelihood of, or causes, harm for example making, sending and receiving explicit images.

The IT service providers have technical responsibility for:

- maintaining filtering and monitoring systems
- providing filtering and monitoring reports
- completing actions following concerns or checks to systems

The IT service providers work with the Head of IT and DSL to:

- procure systems
- identify risk
- carry out reviews
- carry out checks

The School recognises that children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e., 3G, 4G and 5G) which means that children may consensually and/or non-consensually share indecent images, sexually harass their peers via mobile and smart technology, and view and share pornography and other harmful content whilst at school undetected. Further detail of the School's policy and procedures in relation to online safety can be found in the School's E-Safety Policy which also includes detail on the use of mobile and smart technology in School, including the School's management of the associated risks, and the School's IT arrangements to ensure that children are safe from harmful and inappropriate content, including terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet through the School's systems. These systems will be reviewed periodically.

The School will liaise with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and the systems the School uses to filter and monitor online use. Parents and carers will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online when undertaking remote learning, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the School their child is going to be interacting with online.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The School recognises that artificial intelligence, including generative AI, presents both significant opportunities and safeguarding risks in education. The School is committed to ensuring that the use of AI is safe, ethical, transparent and aligned with the School's safeguarding obligations. The School's approach to AI safeguarding is embedded within the existing provisions of this policy, including in relation to filtering and monitoring, online safety, training and responding to specific safeguarding issues.

The School will only use AI products that meet the DfE's Generative AI: product safety expectations, and any use of generative AI by staff or pupils will be carefully considered and assessed, evaluating the benefits and risks within the School's context. This includes the risk of AI-generated child sexual abuse material and deepfake intimate imagery, which is now explicitly included within the definition of child-on-child abuse (see above) and is a criminal offence under the Crime and Policing Act 2026. Staff who become aware of AI-generated images involving pupils should record this on MyConcern immediately.

Use of Mobile Phones

The School operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default, in accordance with the DfE's statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools, which is now incorporated directly into KCSiE 2026. Pupils do not have access to their mobile phones throughout the school day. The School's mobile phone policy sets out the detail of this arrangement and any agreed exceptions, which must be formally justified.

Sport

The School recognises that sport and physical activities can present unique safeguarding risks. Staff involved in the delivery of sport and physical education should be alert to safeguarding concerns that may arise in these settings, including risks associated with physical contact, changing facilities, one-to-one coaching, and away fixtures or tours. The School will have regard to the relevant provisions in KCSiE and any guidance issued by relevant national governing bodies of sport or professional associations. Where the School engages external sports coaches or providers, it will satisfy itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out and that providers have adequate safeguarding policies in place.

The Pastoral Curriculum (PHSE/RSE/Mental Health)

The School understands that preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares children for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic, and sexual violence/harassment.

The School will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* when making arrangements for and teaching Relationships Education AND/OR RSE.

Looked after children

The Governing Body ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe any children on roll who are looked after by a local authority.

Mrs Anna Kennedy is the designated member of staff who has responsibility for their welfare and progress. The School ensures that the designated member of staff receives appropriate training in order to carry out their role.

Arrangements for visiting speakers

The School has clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable. The School's responsibility to pupils is to ensure that they can critically assess the information they receive as to its value to themselves, and that the information is aligned to the ethos and values of the School and British values.

The School is required to complete a Visiting Speaker Form before agreeing to a Visiting Speaker being allowed to attend the School. This will take into account any vetting requirements considered appropriate in the circumstances and may include a DBS check if relevant.

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.

Visiting Speakers, whilst on the School site, will be supervised by a School employee. On attending the School, visiting speakers will be required to show original current identification documents including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence. The School shall also keep a formal register of visiting speakers retained in line with its Data Protection Policy.

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.

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 LADO when appropriate.

Use of mobile phones and cameras

The School's policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting can be found in the School's Photographs and Images of Children policy. Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile devices or cameras to take photographs of children. Staff who wish to take photographs or video of pupils (whether on a personal or School device) must first speak with the DSL to obtain their approval before taking any image of a pupil. Staff who act in breach of this may be subject to disciplinary action. Parents are not permitted to use their mobile phones or camera in or around the EYFS setting without prior approval from the Head or DSL.

Screen Use

The School has regard to Government guidance on screen use for children in the early years, including the impact of screen time on children's health, development and wellbeing. Staff in the EYFS setting are aware of the risks associated with excessive or inappropriate screen use for young children and take steps to manage and limit children's exposure to screens in line with this guidance.

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)

APPENDIX 1 –SIGNS AND TYPES OF ABUSE

Physical abuse

Emotional abuse

Sexual abuse

Sexual harassment

Sexual violence

Child-on-child sexual violence and/or harassment

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

Upskirting

Neglect

Serious violence

Specific safeguarding issues

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

County lines

Modern Slavery

Cybercrime

Mental health

So called 'honour based' abuse

Forced marriage

Radicalisation

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

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual ("LGBTQIA+")

Domestic abuse

Homelessness

Children who are absent from school

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Children and the court system

All 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 with one another therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL (or DDSL)

All Staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All Staff, but especially the DSL and DDSL, 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.

All Staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and should recognise that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently online and in daily life. Staff should be aware that children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if Staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or DDSL)

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child

(including through corporal punishment). Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is defined as 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Sexual abuse also includes sexual violence and sexual harassment (see below) which can occur between two children of any sex (also known as child-on-child abuse). This can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence are sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, such as rape, sexual assault, and assault by penetration. Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.

Sexual harassment

Sexual Harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include 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; or upskirting, and sharing of unwanted explicit content (for example displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature); and online sexual harassment, which might include consensual or non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (often referred to as the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes, or sexting – see below); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

Sexual violence

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, and/or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity, but not another, or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16, and sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Child-on-child sexual violence and/or harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment (as defined above) can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and harassment, and it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by boys. It can however occur between children of any sex. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Children who are victims of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college.

KCSiE broadens this category to also explicitly include harassment and violence between pupils that is not sexual in nature — physical aggression, intimidation and targeted harassment now sit within the same reporting framework and threshold as sexual harm.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

HSB is problematic, abusive, and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour." Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful

if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' age difference, or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes: the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps 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 can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts and may include images or footage of more than one child or young person.

Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics' or may be referred to by adults or professionals as 'youth produced/involved sexual imagery', 'indecent imagery', 'image based sexual abuse' or 'sexting'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online or use artificial intelligence (AI) to generate a new nude or semi-nude image of a young person (the Department of Education has published Generative AI: product safety expectations to support schools to use generative artificial intelligence safely, and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education).
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g., by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame
- For this reason, incidents can either be classified as 'aggravated' or 'experimental'. The DDCMS / UKIS guidance "*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*" sets out the classification of incidents, and how each should be managed.

Upskirting

Upskirting is a criminal offence and typically involves taking 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. Anyone of any sex can be a victim.

Debagging or Pantsing

Also known as depantsing, dacking, flagging, sharking, and scanting, debagging is the pulling down of a person's trousers and sometimes also underpants, usually against their wishes, and typically as a practical joke or a form of bullying meant to cause humiliation. Such an act is treated as sexual harassment.

Neglect

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

Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime include increased absence from School, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All Staff should be aware of the associated risks which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence (for example, being male, frequent absence from school or permanently excluded from school, experienced child maltreatment or having been involved in offending) and understand the measures in place to manage these.

Specific safeguarding issues

Behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger. Safeguarding issues can also manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse, such as abuse within intimate partner relationships, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting and upskirting. Safeguarding issues can also be linked to, for example, children

absent from education; child sexual exploitation; domestic violence; fabricated or induced illness; faith abuse (including ostracism of families); female genital mutilation; forced marriage; gangs and youth violence; gender-based violence / violence against women and girls; hate; mental health; preventing radicalisation; relationship abuse; sexting; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes; and trafficking.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse (see above) which 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 (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. 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.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years (including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex) who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g., through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE 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.

The below Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends, and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

The DfE has published guidance on this entitled "*Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners*".

CSE may occur alone, or may overlap with CCE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. 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. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see below), forced to shoplift or pickpocket. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (especially when they are older children). It is important in these circumstances that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts, money, or new possessions
- children who associate with other children involved in exploitation
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who are absent for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be hugely different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.²³⁷

CCE may occur alone, or may overlap with CSE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line.”

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults exploited to sell drugs and move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes, and care homes. Children are 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 ways of identifying indicators for CSE and CCE 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:

- are absent and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- that have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g., knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging,’ where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

Modern Slavery

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 National Referral Mechanism is available in the statutory guidance "*Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims (May 2022)*".

Cybercrime

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 DSL or DDSL, 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. 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, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.gov.uk.

Cybercrime continues to represent one of the fastest-growing areas of criminal activity. Where staff have concerns that a pupil may be involved in cybercrime, this should be reported to the DSL in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

Mental health

All Staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, or potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

If Staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following this policy, and speaking to the DSL or DDSL.

The DfE has published advice and guidance on *Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools*. In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary and senior school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance *Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing*. Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol.²⁴¹

So called 'honour based' abuse

This encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)], forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can also be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM. To give an example of indications that a girl has already been subjected to FGM:

- A pupil may have difficulty walking, sitting, or standing and may even look uncomfortable.

- A pupil may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems or spend longer than normal in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from School and/or noticeable behaviour changes (e.g., withdrawal or depression) on the pupil's return.
- A pupil is reluctant to undergo medical examination.
- If staff have a concern that a pupil may be at risk of FGM, they should speak to the DSL or DDSL who will (where appropriate) activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and Children's Social Care.

There is a statutory duty on teachers to personally 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. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL or DDSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. If the teacher is unsure whether this reporting duty applies, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL in accordance with this policy. Where a teacher suspects that a pupil is at risk (i.e., where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or it involves a pupil over 18, teachers should follow the School's local safeguarding procedures.

Further information can be found in the *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation and the FGM resource pack*, particularly section 13.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is illegal to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

Schools can play a key role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, details of which can be found on pages 13-14 of the *Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage*. Further

information on forced marriage is available in guidance published by the Forced Marriage Unit. School staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmufco.gov.uk.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It can also call for the death of members of the armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a Prevent referral. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in colleges should familiar themselves with the Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales. Staff should contact the DSL or the DDSL, who should be aware of the local procedures in place, before making a Prevent referral.

In the event of a child leaving, the DSL should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives at the new school.

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

Pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. These children may not outwardly show signs of abuse and/or may have difficulties in communication about abuse, neglect or exploitation 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;

- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges;
- being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in School or the consequences of doing so.

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.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual ("LGBTQIA+")

This section remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published

The fact that a child may be LGBTQIA+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBTQIA+ can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a pupil who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQIA+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQIA+. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBTQIA+ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. The School endeavours to provide a safe space for LGBTQIA+ children to speak out or share their concerns with trusted members of Staff.

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 but not limited to, psychological, sexual, 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.

School staff can contact Operation Encompass on 0204 513 9990 (8 am to 1pm, Monday to Friday) or call 101 for advice in respect of children who have experienced domestic abuse.

Temporary Accommodation Notification

Where the School receives a notification from the local housing authority, under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, that a child has been placed in temporary accommodation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will:

- assess whether the child's welfare needs have changed and whether additional pastoral, academic or safeguarding support is required;
- liaise with relevant agencies, including the local housing authority and, where appropriate, local authority children's social care, to ensure coordinated support is provided; and
- make a referral to local authority children's social care where there are concerns that the child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

This notification does not replace existing safeguarding and welfare duties. Staff who become aware of concerns about a child's welfare arising from homelessness or temporary accommodation should report these to the DSL in the usual way.

Homelessness

Being homeless, or at risk of homelessness presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The School should be aware of potential indicators of homelessness including household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and anti-social behaviour, as well as a family being asked to leave a property. If Staff are made aware or suspect that a pupil may be at risk of homelessness they should talk to the DSL or DDSL in the first instance. Whilst referrals to the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not and should not replace a referral to the LADO where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, in accordance with this policy.

Children who are absent from school

A child who is absent from School is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding issues including abuse, neglect, exploitation, sexual abuse, CSE and CCE. It can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Staff must follow the School's procedures for dealing with children who are absent, particularly persistently. The School's procedure for dealing with children who are absent can be found in the School's Absent Children Policy. All unexplained absences will be followed up in accordance with this Absent Children and Attendance Policy.

The School shall inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). This will assist the local authority to:

- fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are Absent from education; and
- follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or radicalisation.
- School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. The School will inform the School's local authority and the local authority where the child is normally resident) 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.

Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare. The School's policy supports identification of abuse and provides preventative measures against the risk of the child being absent in the future. This applies when issues are first emerging as well as where children are already known to the local authority children's social care and need a social worker.

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.

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.

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.

The guides explain each step of the process, 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.

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