



NETHERTON C of E Primary School

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

RESPONSIBILITY: Headteacher

Governor: Margaret Hollis

Last reviewed on:	September 2025
Next review due by:	September 2026

“Where dreams are made, and futures created.”

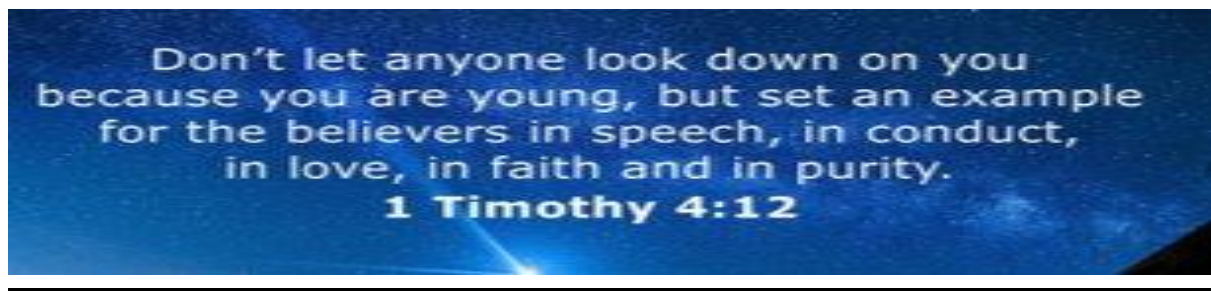


Netherton C of E Primary School

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy September 2024 – August 2025



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Rationale

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. They have a right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment. It is a guiding principle of the law and child protection procedures that the protection and welfare of a child must always be the first priority. Failure to provide an effective response can have serious consequences for the child.

Safeguarding is defined as –

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Child protection is defined as –

- Protecting children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect.
- Providing the protection of children both in and out of the home, according to Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

‘Children’ includes everyone under the age of 18.

Three Safeguarding Partners are referred to in this policy. They are:

- ✓ The local authority (LA)
- ✓ A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- ✓ The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

They will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

Important Contacts (Netherton C of E)

Role	Named Person for Netherton C of E	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mrs. K. Harvey, Head teacher	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Mrs W. Rickers Mrs T. Parton Mrs L. Ryall-Whyte Mrs J. Wheatley	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
CSE lead	Mrs. K Harvey, Head teacher	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Prevent Lead	Mrs K Harvey	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
SENCo	Mrs. L Ryall White	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Looked After Child Designated Person	Mrs. L Ryall White	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Privately Fostered Lead	Mrs L Ryall White	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
E-Safety Lead	Miss H Griffiths, I.T. Lead	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Mental Health Leads	Mrs S Powell & Mrs L Walton	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
School Nurse	Mrs. J Potter	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Governor Responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection	Mrs M. Hollis	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Miss A Hickman-Smith	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk
Vice Chair of Governors:	Reverend Richard Hackett	info@netherton.dudley.sch.uk

Important Contacts (Dudley LA)

Role	Named person for Dudley L.A.	Contact
Privately Fostered	Angela Marsh	
Virtual Head Lead	Emma Thomas	01384 813493 / 813494 Emma.Thomas@dudley.gov.uk
Dudley Prevent Lead	Mark Wilson	Mark.Wilson@dudley.gov.uk https://www.dudleysafeandsound.org/prevent
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff	Yvonne Nelson-Brown Sukhchandan Kaur	01384 813110 Yvonne.Nelson-Brown@dudley.gov.uk 01384 813066 Sukhchandan.kaur@dudley.gov.uk General line: 01384 813061 Referral email: allegations@dudley.gov.uk
Referral Pathway into the Exploitation Hub	Lorna Nolan	CS.Hub@dudley.gov.uk
Escalation pathway	Jane Dicken, Interim Safeguarding Lead in Education	Jane.Dickens@dudley.gov.uk

Dudley Front Door (formerly known as MASH)		Tel 0300 555 0050 / option 4 for significant concerns, option 7 for advice Out of Hours Team: Tel 0300 555 8574
CSE Team:	Nikki Fernandes	nikki.fernandes@dudley.gov.uk

1. Purpose and Aims

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors at Netherton C of E and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The school aims to ensure that:

- ✓ Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- ✓ All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- ✓ Staff are properly training in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.
- ✓ Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- ✓ Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- ✓ Are young carers.
- ✓ May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- ✓ Have English as an additional language.
- ✓ Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- ✓ Are at risk of FGM, sexual and criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalization.
- ✓ Are asylum seekers.
- ✓ Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- ✓ Are Children in Care or previously Children in Care.
- ✓ Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions.
- ✓ Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#) (Note there is now a new illustrated document which outlines what working with agencies and services means for children and young people)

- [Maintained Schools Governance Guide](#)
- [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#).

We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools’ duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it’s proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there’s evidence that they’re being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the “2018 Childcare

Disqualification Regulations”) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the

- [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association

3. Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The school’s policy has been written taking into consideration our locally agreed multi-agency procedures that have been put in place by the three safeguarding partners:

- ✓ Dudley Local Authority (LA)
- ✓ Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- ✓ The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

The links for Dudley’s procedures are below:

<https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/>

<https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/DSPP-Support-Level-Guidance-and-Framework-March-2023.pdf>

The safeguarding priorities for Dudley 2024/2026 are:

Three safeguarding priorities have been identified for 2024-2026:

- Mental Health of Children, Young People and Adults with care and support needs, including the impact of parental mental health
- Transitional Safeguarding
- Exploitation

These are detailed further on the above website and are included in whole school training.

Netherton C of E Primary fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

We seek to ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect children from harm. To this end we will:

- Ensure there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback e.g., through school/class councils, safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying and e-safety events;
- Ensure that the child's thoughts/wishes and feelings are sought and recorded on all referrals.

4. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- 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 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

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Neglect is a form of abuse and 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. Further definition of neglect are detailed in the policy.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

At Netherton C of E, we have a team of DSLs.

Our DSLs are Kathryn Harvey, Head Teacher & Wendy Rickers, Assistant Head teacher.

The deputy DSLs are Tracey Parton, Family Liaison; Lisa Ryall-Whyte, SENDCo; & Jo Wheatly, EYFS Leader.

The (D)DSLs take lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSLs will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSLs are contactable via phone or email, out of school hours and during the holidays.

When the DSL is absent, the deputies, Wendy Rickers, Tracey Parton, Lisa Ryall-Whyte & Joanne Wheatley will act as cover.

The DSLs will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- ✓ Work closely with teachers and share information & provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and safeguarding and child protection matters.
- ✓ Sets out procedures so that staff promptly share their safeguarding concerns in writing.

- ✓ Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.
- ✓ Refer cases of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care.
- ✓ Refer cases to the Channel program where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to Channel program.
- ✓ Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police.
- ✓ Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- ✓ Contribute to the assessment of children, particularly in relation to Early Help.
- ✓ Work closely with Mental Health Leads.
- ✓ Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel Panel, Disclosure and Barring Service and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- ✓ Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- ✓ Have a good understanding and takes the lead of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school, this is included in the DSL's job description.
- ✓ Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support.
- ✓ Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- ✓ The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers (LADO) for safeguarding and child protection concerns as appropriate.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

6. The Headteacher, Governing Body, Trustees, Proprietors

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary & supply staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Ensuring that staff (including temporary & supply staff) understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website

- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly, including online and cyber security.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service/Teaching Regulatory Agency/TRA as required
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- Complete appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting
- Promoting good oral health and signposting accordingly to services

The Governing body, Trustees or Proprietors will approve this policy at each review, ensure it complies with the law and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Body/Trust will appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead, Margaret Hollis, to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

The Chair of governors, Alison Hickman-Smith, will act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 2).

The Governing Body/trust will be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

All Governors have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners

The Governing Body/Trustees, will seek assurance of the following areas:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects that child with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

Other areas of assurance include:

Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:

- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
- Reviewing the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

All Governors have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. (Part Two of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.)

7. Safeguarding Policies and Procedures/Legal Responsibilities and duty to share information

7.1 Our safeguarding responsibilities include:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- 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 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

'Child protection' refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

Three Safeguarding Partners as identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will decide to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

7.2 Our Roles and Responsibilities include:

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors/trustees in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education by embedding safeguarding and well-being in the school curriculum (see Section 38 of this policy)

7.3 All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems that support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, the online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The early help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning can be targeted by other children
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

8.0 Training

To ensure that the DSL and deputies, also all staff, governors and volunteers are able to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, the following training will be in place.

8.1 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. Online safety training will be undertaken annually and regularly updated to keep knowledge of staying safe online and the risks associated up to date, this includes including filtering and monitoring and cyber security

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They will also undertake Prevent Awareness training.

8.2 Staff safeguarding training.

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training, online safety training including IT filtering and monitoring roles and responsibilities, together with managing allegations and whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities and can identify signs of possible abuse, neglect and exploitation. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with local and statutory guidelines.

In addition:

- All staff will undertake annual Cyber-security training.
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils
- All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.
- Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety, as required but at least annually. Regular updates throughout the academic year could include (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.
- All new staff will receive robust safeguarding training in line with the whole school training package; this will be delivered as part of their induction process before they commence working with our pupils/students.

8.3 Volunteers and Contractors

All volunteers and contractors will receive safeguarding procedures and guidance on their arrival at the school this will include how to report a concern, the behavioural expectations of the visitors to ensure that children are safe, also filtering and monitoring alongside appropriate use of mobile technology. Safeguarding information will be provided as required during their time working with the school to ensure that they are compliant.

Visitor checks

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

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

Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or the organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out

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

8.4 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This will ensure that all governors have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge, in addition that they can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

All Governors will undertake training relating to online filtering and monitoring, in addition one Governor will be trained in Cyber-security.

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

9. Confidentiality

At Netherton C of E, all staff and visitors are expected to maintain confidentiality. However, with regards to safeguarding, staff should remember:

- ✓ Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- ✓ Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- ✓ The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- ✓ If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- ✓ In addition, see the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools> which will help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

- ✓ Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- ✓ The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- ✓ If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy)
- ✓ Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 10

10. Communication with parents

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents/carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents/carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents/carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when.

We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

11. Reporting systems for our pupils

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

At Netherton CofE, pupils are made aware of

who the DSLs are (posters around school and in planners)

the reporting systems and processes, through discussion in PSHE, RSE, assemblies, information around school and in planners and informal chats with staff.

that they can speak to any trusted adult that they feel comfortable speaking to.

All staff are trained regarding the procedures when a pupil speaks to them and how to report this via CPOMs and/ or directly to a (D)DSL.

Pupils will feel safe in submitting any concerns – they will be believed, comforted & offered reassurance as necessary but no false promises will be made, following disclosures.

DSLs will ensure that reports are followed up in a timely and appropriate manner and the pupils will be informed what is happening in age-appropriate way, if appropriate.

12 Whole Staff Responsibilities

All Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

12.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to Multi Agency Support Team relevant to the child's home address, for Dudley children this is Dudley Front Door and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral. **Dudley Report it page** <https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/>

Tell the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so

Aside from the above professionals, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process

It is important to also understand the following:

- The child may not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

12.2 Reporting concerns and making a referral

If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger) Figure 1 (below) illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or take advice from Local Authority Children's Social Care. Referrals should be made by completing a Request for Advice and Support [Children's Services Portal site](#) or [contact 0300 555 0050](#).

Make a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

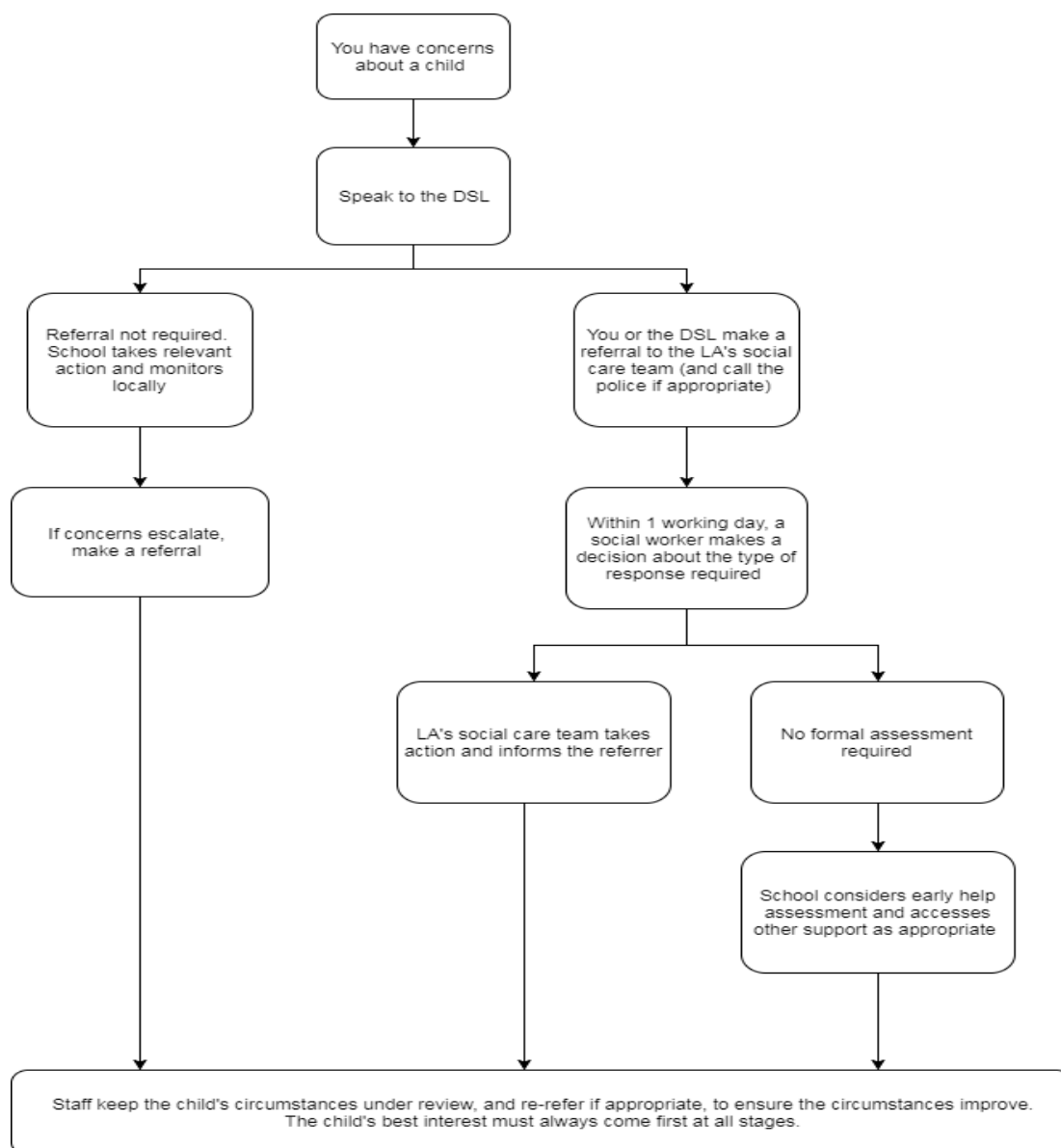
If it is appropriate to refer the case to Local Authority Children's Social Care or the Police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The Local Authority will decide within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the Local Authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves. Advice and further information on Dudley Professional Resolution should be accessed from the Lead for Safeguarding in Education, Dudley local authority further information is available on the Dudley Safeguarding partnership website.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action.)



13. Record keeping

At Netherton C of E, we use CPOMS to report concerns and keep records of safeguarding or child protection concerns. The complete safeguarding history of a child is easily (but securely) accessible to DSLs. Using this electronic reporting system allows us to share safeguarding information easily from previous / receiving schools if a child moves school. The records are stored safely and accessed only by those staff who have permissions, but all staff can report concerns on CPOMS.

- ✓ We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.
- ✓ All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

- ✓ Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- ✓ Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period after they have left the school. These are archived within the CPOMs system.
- ✓ If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their safeguarding & child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, within 5 school days of starting at the new education setting, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information (using the pupil safeguarding form) to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

At times, school will need to share information with other agencies, and this will be done when this is appropriate, in line with Dudley safeguarding procedures.

14. Thresholds and Early Help

Early Help provides extra support when a family needs it most - as soon as difficulties start rather than waiting until things get worse. It's for families with children and young people aged 0-18 years and young people with an additional need or disabilities up to 24 years.

Dudley Early Help information leaflet <https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Early-Help-A5-4pp-Leaflet-v2.pdf>

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

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

If early help is appropriate, the DSL/DDSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Level 1 - No referral is required. Professionals should contact Dudley's Family Information Service on 01384 814398 to obtain universal information about support available for children, young people and families.

Dudley Safeguarding Partnership threshold guidance is below, this should be considered when completing Request for Help and Support Form

<https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/DSPP-Support-Level-Guidance-and-Framework-March-2023.pdf>

15. When to be concerned

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead and deputies, should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) **sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse)**, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. **Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.** Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

15.1 Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

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

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

- ✓ Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- ✓ Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- ✓ Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- ✓ Seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of the ill-treatment of another (the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, for example)
- ✓ Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether 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.

Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

16. Specific Safeguarding Issues

This section is based on the advice in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Annex B includes information on further issues to be aware of, including children's involvement in the court system, children with family members in prison, and county lines.

17. Child on child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online and can occur simultaneously between the two.

Victims will be taken seriously, kept safe and never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

We recognise that children can abuse other children. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Child on child abuse can include the following:

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

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there no reports, that doesn’t mean that this kind of abuse isn’t happening.

Most cases of pupils/students hurting other pupils/students will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- ✓ Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- ✓ Could put pupils/students in the school at risk
- ✓ Is violent
- ✓ Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- ✓ Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting)

17.1 If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- ✓ You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- ✓ The DSL will contact the Local Authority Children’s Social Care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence

- ✓ The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- ✓ The DSL will contact the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), if appropriate

We will minimise the risk of Child-on-Child abuse by:

- ✓ Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- ✓ Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys.
- ✓ Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- ✓ Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
- ✓ Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- ✓ Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- ✓ Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- ✓ Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment

Ensure staff are trained to understand

- ✓ How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- ✓ That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- ✓ That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
- ✓ Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
- ✓ A friend may make a report
- ✓ A member of staff may overhear a conversation
- ✓ A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- ✓ That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- ✓ That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- ✓ The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- ✓ That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

- ✓ That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side
- The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.
- Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:
- ✓ Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this
- ✓ There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

18. Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This is a suggested approach based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety [advice for education settings](#) for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved
- You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care

- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident. See appendix 4 for more information on assessing adult-involved incidents
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through [insert details of your existing arrangements, e.g. a safer schools officer, a police community support officer, local neighbourhood police, dialling 101].

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

19. So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

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

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

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

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

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

19.1 Female Genital Mutilation - If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises *'all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs.'*

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

19.2 Forced Marriage

Implementation of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022, Since February 2023 it has been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used.

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered 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 a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

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

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

The DSL will:

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

20. Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see below))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

21. Child Criminal Exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

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

22. Child sexual exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

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

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

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

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

23. Children who are absent from education

Unexplainable or persistent absences from education, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

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

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/681b42043f1c73824ee3e4f0/Children_and_young_person_guide_to_working_together_to_safeguard_children.pdf

24. Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

If a child goes missing from class (within school), staff will:

1. Alert SLT as soon as possible
2. Available staff will search school for the pupil
3. When found, the pupil will be given time to regulate, and a member of staff will talk to them to find out why they went missing
4. Any issues will be resolved and when judged to be ready, the child will return to class
5. Parents will be informed by the class teacher or a member of SLT as appropriate

If a child goes missing from school (outside the gates), we will:

1. Keep eyes on the child as much as possible
2. Alert SLT immediately
3. If the child is still within the vicinity of the school premises and can be seen, SLT will phone the parents.
4. If the child runs away from school (is no longer in sight), SLT will phone the parents and the police.
5. School will work with the police and parents to ensure the pupil is found safe and well.
6. School will work with the pupil and parents to resolve the issues which have caused the pupil to go missing.

If a child is missing at the end of school, we will:

1. Check with the class teacher if they were collected and by whom
2. Check all after-school clubs & the school premises
3. Keep in contact with parents and inform each other if the child arrives home or returns to school.
4. School & parent contact relatives/ friend's parents to establish if they have collected the child
5. Contact police if the child is not found within a appropriate period of time

If a child is missing from after-school club, we will:

1. Check whether the child is absent from school
2. Check with class teacher if they have been collected by an adult at the end of day
3. Check they are not attending another club, record this and ask the office to amend the registers on Arbor.
4. If they have not attended/ are not at another after school club please, school will phone home immediately.
5. If the child no longer wants to attend the club, they will be removed from the register.

25. Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL and deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

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

26. Domestic Abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

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

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of [Operation Encompass](#).

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

27. Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence 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.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Preplanning, effective training and effective policies will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

Ultimately, the school will make any decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt
- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns

- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the reporting procedures within school ensuring that the DSL is informed immediately.

Working together to safeguard children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

28. Radicalisation and Extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
- Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points

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 of terrorism is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

28.1 Preventing radicalisation

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on

extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

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

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

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

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour, staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

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

Dudley's LA Prevent Officer is Mark.Wilson@dudley.gov.uk

28.2 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

29. Mental Health

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.

The school's Mental Health Leads are Sarah Powell and Lyndsey Walton

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Netherton C of E has a separate **Mental Health & Well-being policy**

For more information, refer to the Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#)

30. LGBT+ pupils

Some pupils/students may be vulnerable due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, either because they are subject to homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic bullying or because of negative responses from parents/carers or others, which may result in increased risk of self-harm, suicide or homelessness.

Several studies also evidence that LGBT+ young people may be at increased risk of becoming victims of CSE.

Schools should therefore ensure that they are aware of the increased risk factors and know how to access appropriate support for these young people when required.

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

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools should refer to our Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

The section of KCSIE 2025 on gender questioning children remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

31. Online Safety and the use of mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism

Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as 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 – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as 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; and

Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum.
For example:
 - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
 - Keeping personal information private
 - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
 - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
 - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively

- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our Online Safety Policy and Mobile Phone Policy which can be found on our website

The latest Screening and confiscation guidance

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

See also: Teaching Online Safety in schools 2019

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf

32. Children in Care (CiC) and Post Children in Care

Our school's designated member of staff is work in partnership with the Virtual School on how funding can best support the progress of a CiC. The name of the Virtual Headteacher is Emma Thomas

Emma.Thomas@dudley.gov.uk

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. We will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have a designated teacher, Mrs L. Ryall-Whyte, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans
- Independent schools insert:
- We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. We will ensure that:
- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- We have appointed an appropriately trained lead, to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

As part of their role, they will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children

33. Children with a social worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

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

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

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

34. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- ✓ Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- ✓ Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils.
- ✓ The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- ✓ Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- ✓ We offer extra pastoral support for pupils with SEN and disabilities. This includes such things as:
 - Nurture
 - Forest School
 - The Hive
 - The Nest
 - Sensory Circuits
- ✓ Our SENDCO is Mrs Ryall-Whyte

Schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. Further information can be found in the departments.

• SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years -

[SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/publishing.service.gov.uk/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

and

Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK

[Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/supporting-pupils-with-medical-conditions-at-school)

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: Find your local IAS service <https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/about-us-0/networks/information-advice-and-support-services-network/find-your-local-ias-service>

- <https://www.mencap.org.uk/> - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | NSPCC Learning
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>

Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/deaf-and-disabled-children#risk-and-vulnerability-factors>

35. Collection of pupils and non-collection of pupils at the end of the session/day

At the end of the school day, teachers will dismiss the pupils in their class to a known adult. They will only be released to adults known to them and given permission by the parent to collect their child.

Pupils will only be released to older siblings under the age of 16 if parents contact the school to give permission. This is recorded on Arbor.

Older children will be released to walk home, only if their parents have consented to them doing so via a slip or via email. This is recorded on Arbor.

Teachers will wait with their pupils until they are collected. If, 5/10 minutes after the end of the school day, a pupil has still not been collected, they will be escorted to the main entrance where the child will be supervised until their parent arrives to collect them.

If a parent / known adult hasn't arrived or contacted the school to say they are running late, school will call them. If school cannot get hold of the parent, they will try other contact numbers held for the child.

Depending on how long the adult collecting will be, the pupil will join an after school club until the known adult arrives.

In the event of no parent/known adult arriving to collect, no contact being made (from them to school or school to any contact number held), school will follow their procedures and refer to Children's Services.

36. Safer Recruitment procedure

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders
- Shortlisting
- Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:
- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:
- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they can share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
 - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
 - Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true
- We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees

- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher

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

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

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

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

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

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

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

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

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

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors and members

All trustees, local governors and members] will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK
- Non-maintained special schools add:
- The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.
- All governors will also have the following checks:
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will ensure we are satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs. We will obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. The department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision> - DFE statutory guidance

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school> - DFE statutory guidance

37. Procedure for dealing with Allegations about Staff - Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

The procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff is outlined in Part Four of KCSiE, detailed in Netherton CofE's Staff Code of Conduct & summarised below.

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher.

Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the Headteacher (NOT to DSL, unless DSL is also the Headteacher).

The headteacher will take such reports seriously and will conduct an investigation. If they deem it necessary, they will inform the Chair of Governors and may contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and will take further direction from them.

LADO is Yvonne Nelson-Brown Yvonne.nelson-brown@dudley.gov.uk

This may result in HR getting involved, in the event of a code of conduct issue or disciplinary or may continue to involve the LADO if further safeguarding is needed.

When the LADO is involved, schools must work with other agencies to investigate when a member of staff has 'behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.'

Supply Staff

If the allegation is about a supply teacher, it will be dealt with appropriately even though school is not the employer. School will not simply cease to use this teacher. This will be managed in the same way as an allegation against a member of staff and the school will advise supply agencies of its process for managing allegations.

Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about the headteacher

If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors, Alison Hickman-Smith, who will conduct any investigation necessary, contacting the LADO if needed.

Staff concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

A concern which does not meet the harm threshold is deemed a **Low-Level Concern**. This is outlined in 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the 'harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Some examples of concerns might be:

- Humiliating pupils
- Taking a photo of a child on a mobile
- Taking a pupil to a secluded area
- Swearing in front of pupils

To report a concern, staff should complete the DOWMAT's Low Level Concern Form (this will shortly be replaced by StaffSafe – an online reporting and recording tool) and report to the Head teacher or, in their absence, Wendy Rickers, DDSL.

Concerns will be taken seriously. They will be investigated and handled accordingly. Records will be kept.

Netherton's C of E's procedure for addressing low level concerns are detailed in a separate policy which can be found on the school's website or the DOWMAT's website:

- ✓ **DOWMAT Low Level Concerns Policy**

38. Whistleblowing

If anyone has a concern regarding the way the school safeguards pupils – including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures, they should refer to the **DOWMAT's Whistle-Blowing policy** on the school's website or DOWMAT's website.

This explains

- ✓ The procedures for raising concerns

- ✓ The areas of malpractice or wrongdoing covered by the procedures
- ✓ The options available for reporting a concern, including who to approach within the school and externally
- ✓ How the school will respond to such concerns
- ✓ What protection is available to staff who report another member of staff

39. Safeguarding in the Curriculum

All subject leaders and teachers keep safeguarding in the forefront of their minds when planning and teaching across the curriculum. Lessons, activities and routines are risk assessed, and staff are fully trained in safeguarding procedures should the need arise. Pupils are taught about keeping safe through PSHE / RSE, assemblies and discussions. Signs around school and student planners signpost pupils to people and places they can go to should they need help.

40. Special Circumstances

Further information about safeguarding can be found in the relevant policies

- ✓ **Behaviour**
- ✓ **Staff [Code of conduct]**
- ✓ **Complaints**
- ✓ **Health and safety**
- ✓ **Attendance**
- ✓ **Online safety**
- ✓ **Equality**
- ✓ **Sex and relationship education**
- ✓ **First aid**
- ✓ **Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children**
- ✓ **Privacy notices**
- ✓ **GDPR**
- ✓ **Whistleblowing**
- ✓ **Safer Recruitment**
- ✓ **Anti-bullying**
- ✓ **IT / Acceptable Use policy**
- ✓ **Well-being**

41 . Complaints Procedure

Netherton's C of E's complaints procedure is detailed in a separate policy which can be found on the school's website or the DOWMAT's website:

- ✓ **Dowmat Complaints Procedure**