



HOLMWOOD HOUSE  
SCHOOL

## **SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF ALL PUPILS  
(SCHOOL & NURSERY) INCLUDING BOARDING, EYFS AND HOLIDAY COURSES

**It is essential to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) of any concerns you may have regarding the welfare of a child.**

**SCHOOL DSL AND PREVENT OFFICER, Key Adult for Operation Encompass**  
(with overall responsibility for safeguarding at the school, boarding and EYFS):  
**Mrs Francesca Bradbury** (fcb@holmwood.house)

**SCHOOL Deputy DSL and PREVENT Officers:**  
**Miss Bethan Ashton & Mr Edmund Cook**

School contact: 01206 574305 or dsl@holmwood.house

**NURSERY DSL and PREVENT OFFICER: Karen Travers**

**NURSERY Deputy DSL: Vicki Shreeve, Charlotte Taylor & Claire Cutts**

Nursery number 01206 273827 or karen.travers@holmwood.house

**Governance Lead on Safeguarding:**

**Gregg Davies**  
([gdavies@blvue.com](mailto:gdavies@blvue.com))

**However, if you feel this avenue is not appropriate, or that you feel your concern has not been heard or handled appropriately, you should make a direct referral to:**

The Essex Safeguarding Children Board, (County Hall, Chelmsford, CM2 6WN):

- For advice for safeguarding offences contact the Children & Families Hub on **0345 603 7627** (Monday – Friday 9am-5pm) and specify if you require the:
  - o Priority Referral line (for urgent referrals if the child needs immediate protection)
  - o Consultation line if you have concerns about a child and wish to discuss these with a Social Worker to seek advice about whether a referral is appropriate
- In an emergency out of office hours contact the Emergency Duty Team on **0345 606 1212** or ring the police.
- If there is an allegation against a member of staff, the Headteacher or DSL will contact the LADO (on duty) on **0333 013 9797**

**If an allegation of child abuse involves the Headteacher (Ed Bond), the Safeguarding Governor (Gregg Davies [gdavies@blvue.com](mailto:gdavies@blvue.com)) or the Group Education Directors (Steven Wade [swade@blvue.com](mailto:swade@blvue.com))/David Williams ([dwilliams@blvue.com](mailto:dwilliams@blvue.com)) will be contacted directly by the member of staff making the allegation and one of them will contact the LADO on 0333 013 9797 without the Headteacher's knowledge.**

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## **Holmwood House Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Holmwood House fully recognises its responsibilities for Child Protection and will safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils, which includes the children in boarding and our EYFS settings (Nursery and Reception). It should be noted that the nursery occupies a separate site some 3 miles from the school. Arrangements are in place to enable the safeguarding policy and procedures to operate consistently across both sites. Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. This is defined in this policy as any kind of neglect, non-accidental physical injury, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation or emotional ill treatment.

This policy applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers, is available on the school's website and is available to parents on request. It applies to all areas of the school including Early Years (EYFS). It should be read in conjunction with the Safer Recruitment Policy (see Staff Handbook), Staff Code of Conduct Policy, Physical Intervention Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Educational Visit Policy, E-safety Policy, Social Media Policy and Photography Policy. It should also be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023).

The governors and proprietors will ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. Thus ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the governors, proprietors and school or college leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems will be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

This policy has been written in accordance with:

- i. the DfE guidance document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE September 2023), the updated guidance provided in the document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (December 2023) (WTSC) and 'Early years and later years (under-8's) childcare - Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006' (March 2015), as amended in July 2018.
- ii. Locally agreed inter-agency procedures, specifically the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board, and with the SET Procedures (ESCB\*, updated 2022); the school will participate as appropriate in the 'team around the family' (TAF) approach, or a 'co-ordinated offer of early help', in accordance with WTSC.
- iii. The school recognises the importance of early help in school (see section 4, Procedures) and the difference between a concern and a child in

immediate danger; in each case the DSL will work in accordance with WTSC and the ESCB\* referral thresholds.

*\* Please note that Essex continues to refer to itself as a Safeguarding Children's Board rather than Safeguarding Partners.*

The school is aware of the most recent DfE advice and information which dovetails with WTSC and the *SEND Code 2014: Mental health and behaviour in schools* (March 2015) and *Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future* (March 2015).

Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 2002
- Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB, 2017)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2015)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE, 2014)
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017),
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Promoting Emotional Well-being and Reducing the Risk of Suicide (ESCB 2018)

## **Safeguarding Statement**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child. Anyone can make a referral, which will usually be to the school's DSL, but can be directly to Children's Social Care, if necessary.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

(KCSIE Sept 2023, p6)

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

The school aims to:

- Ensure safe recruitment practices in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Raise awareness of the potential for Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.
- Raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.
- Support a pupil who has been abused in accordance with his or her agreed child protection plan.
- Maintain a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Communicate readily with ESCB whenever an allegation or disclosure of abuse has been made.

The school endeavours to provide a strongly supportive pastoral environment, in which children have a range of adults to whom they can turn, should they have a concern. These include the class teacher, tutor, school counsellor/listener and school wellbeing team. Details of helplines are also available.

Governors (Education Directors) are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

## **2. SAFE RECRUITMENT**

Holmwood House recognises the importance of following recruitment and selection procedures on the appointment of employees and volunteers which help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Recruitment procedures are carried out in accordance with guidance given in 'KCSIE (September 2023)'.

To ensure safer recruitment, the procedures are designed to:

- Scrutinise applicants
- Verify identity (Best practice is with the use of birth certificates (where available) to check identity). Further identification checking guidelines can be found [here](#)
- Verify academic or vocational qualifications

- Obtain professional and character references
- Check previous employment history
- Ensure that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job
- Incorporate a face to face interview
- Include a barred list and Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check that can be accessed via the TRA's prohibition, restriction and barred list checks. See Teachers' Services Website
- Applicants from overseas must be subject to a DBS check and also include an overseas check equivalent to the DBS check for staff appointed directly from overseas (see Page 74 KCSIE 2023)
- Verify the applicant's right to work in the UK
- Include a prohibition order check (for those who undertake 'teaching work'\*) and also an EEA prohibition check for staff appointed to do teaching work from the EEA other than England (see Safer Recruitment guidelines and checklist for further detail)
- Include a prohibition from management check (s 128) for any staff taking up a management position in an independent school, academy, or in a free school as an employee; a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body of an independent school; or a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibility.
- Include, when required, a self-declaration in respect of the Childcare Disqualification Regulations.
- An online search of shortlisted candidates will be carried out and those candidates must be told that this will happen.

\* 'Teaching work': a definition is provided in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 and cited at paragraph 404 in the ISI Regulatory Handbook. The school will judge each appointment on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the role includes 'teaching work'.

These procedures apply to all adults who may undertake a regulated activity (unsupervised) with the children in either a paid or voluntary capacity and any other staff where KCSIE requires checks to be undertaken. The school will verify that child protection checks and procedures listed above have been successfully undertaken for all staff employed by another organisation and who work with the school's pupils either at the school or on another site. This applies, for example, to staff at a swimming pool or an outward bound activity centre and to visiting staff running activities or undertaking sports coaching, even where such staff are paid directly by the parents.

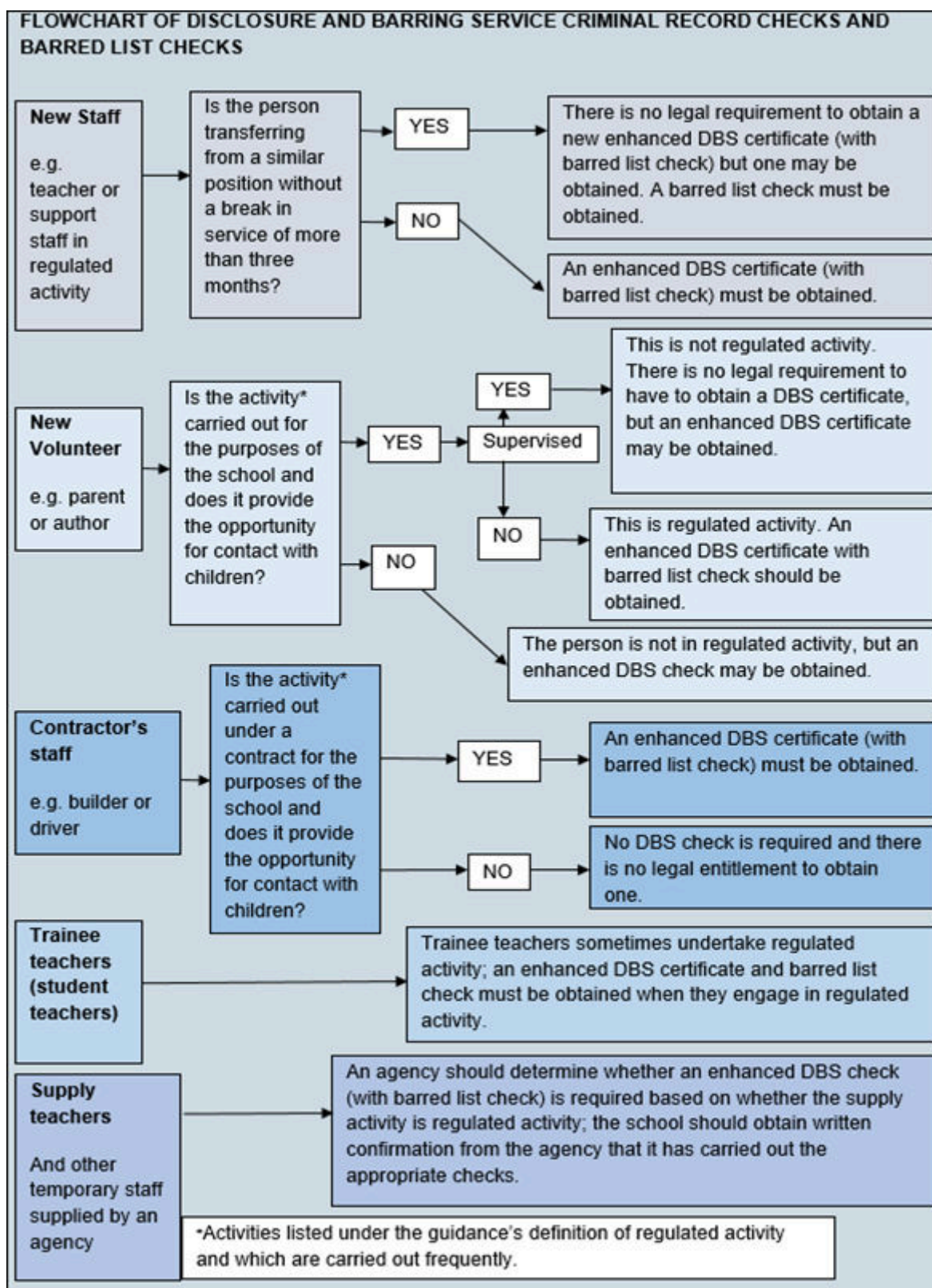
It is the responsibility of those who work or volunteer at the school, or with the school's pupils at a different venue, to inform the Headteacher immediately if, during the time of their engagement with the school, their circumstances change in such a way that they become disqualified from working in childcare, prohibited from teaching or in any other way barred from working with children.

**Use of school or college premises for non-school/college activities**

Where school hires or rents out school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the school, under the direct supervision or management of their school, their arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The school should therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. The school should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

The school may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their premises for the purposes of running activities for children. As with any safeguarding allegation, the school should follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.



**Childcare Disqualification Regulations.** Guidance, available separately, has been published by Bellevue in relation to these requirements, covering disqualification from working in childcare, including disqualification by association. The school will a) inform relevant staff and volunteers about the legislation, including that they may be disqualified by association, b) gather sufficient and accurate information about whether any member of staff in a



relevant childcare setting is disqualified, including by association and c) keep a record on the Single Central Register, including the date disqualification checks were completed. If a person is found to be disqualified, he or she will not be able to continue working in a role covered by the regulations. If appropriate, the school will consider a transfer to other duties. The school will inform Ofsted (and copy to ISI) if satisfied that a person working in a relevant setting falls within one of the disqualification criteria. If appropriate, the school and/or Bellevue will assist in the application to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification.

A copy of the school's 'safer recruitment guidelines and checklist' is available on request.

### **3. AWARENESS OF CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES**

We recognise that, because of their day-to-day contact with children, staff at the school are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Holmwood House will therefore

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- Ensure that children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Ensure that staff recognise the school's duties both to children in need and to children at risk of harm
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for RSHE/PSHCE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, including keeping safe online, and to know whom to turn to for help
  - o The Department for Education has produced a one-stop page for teachers on GOV.UK, which can be accessed [here](#)
- Include in the curriculum material that will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life. We understand that we play a crucial role in preventative education and understand that it is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. We have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school college life. It is underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. It tackles at an age-appropriate stages issues such as:
  - healthy and respectful relationships
  - boundaries and consent
  - stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - body confidence and self-esteem
  - how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
  - the concepts of, and laws relating to- sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called

honour-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support, and what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

- Ensure all staff, including ancillary staff and representatives of the proprietors, receive comprehensive training on child protection issues, as specified by the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) in frequency and content, not less than every three years supplemented by informal updates as required, but at least annually.
- Ensure that all staff working directly with children have read and understand at least Part 1 and Annex B of KCSIE (September 2023); the understanding of staff will be secured by the following measures undertaken by the school
  - Safeguarding Induction Training which talks new staff through the content in a level of depth appropriate and proportionate to the person and their role
  - INSET Training
  - Reminders in Staff Meetings
  - Other means of probing understanding, such as the safeguarding governors' interviews with random staff at the annual Safeguarding Review
- Ensure that all school leaders and staff that work directly with children read Part 1, including Annex B, of KSCIE 2023 which deal with types of abuse and matters such as children missing education, child criminal exploitation (CCE), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), radicalisation, county lines and honour based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)
- Ensure that all school staff that are not directly working with children read the condensed part 1 at Annex A.
- Ensure that temporary and voluntary staff who work with children are made aware of the arrangements, based on a risk based approach – whereby the school assesses the level of detail with which such staff should be provided. In addition, all new staff and volunteers will receive training as part of their induction process, which will include an explanation of the systems to support Safeguarding. To ensure best practice, the DSLs for child protection will receive appropriate training, including in inter-agency working, every two years, supplemented by informal updates as required, but at least annually in accordance with locally agreed procedures and the requirements of KCSIE Annex C.

In order to ensure that new staff are fully aware of their duties regarding safeguarding, as part of the induction training for all staff, they will receive a copy and an explanation of:

- This safeguarding policy
- The staff code of conduct/behaviour policy
- The behaviour, discipline and exclusions policy for pupils, to include measure to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- The school's safeguarding response to children missing education
- The role and identity of the DSL, and Deputies

- The school's approach to online safety, including knowing their role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- 

Additionally, at induction, staff must be provided with a copy of

- This safeguarding policy
- The staff code of conduct/behaviour policy, which includes acceptable use of IT, staff/pupil relationships, how to deal with concerns at both a low level and above and the use of social media (see 10, below in this policy)
- The Children Missing Education policy (contained within Appendix 1 of this policy)
- The role of the DSL and DDSLs (contained within this policy)
- Part 1 and Annex B of KCSIE (September 2023) or Annex A is for those who do not work directly with children
- The whistle-blowing policy

#### **4. PROCEDURES**

The school will follow the procedures set out by ESCB, the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2022) and 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2021) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), as noted above. Links to these documents can be found in Appendix 2, guidance from KCSIE September 2023, Part 4, section 1 states that procedures should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, by showing transferable risk in another context e.g. mistreatment of vulnerable people in a care home.

In order to meet the aims of this policy, the school has the following measures in place:

Bellevue Governance ensures that the school has a DSL for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for such a role and a DDSL with a similar level of training to cover in the event of absence. In the event of the DSL being the subject of an allegation, the school's response will be coordinated by the DDSL, who will liaise with Safeguarding Governor or proprietor.

Steve Wade, Group Education Director for Bellevue Education Group, oversees safeguarding arrangements on behalf of the board of directors. Gregg Davies, Safeguarding Governor for Bellevue Education Group, is designated by the board to oversee and monitor the school's safeguarding policy and practice. In conjunction with David Williams, Education Director they conduct an annual Safeguarding Review of the school's child protection policy and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. As a

result, any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements will be remedied immediately. The reporting of arrangements for each school form part of the reporting process to the Education Committee, which includes Steven Wade, Gregg Davies and David Williams, which is responsible for the overall governance of Bellevue Schools.

The school ensures that every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) know and understand:

- The name of the DSL and DDSLs and their roles
- The responsibility of all staff to be alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL.
- The procedures identified within the school policy.

The school ensures that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff in relation to safeguarding and child protection, by publishing appropriate policies on the school's website.

The school ensures that members of staff are aware of the need to act on concerns about the welfare of a child immediately and to speak with the DSL or DDSL in accordance with this policy. Staff need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may tell of abuse. The school provides child protection training within the induction programme for all new staff and volunteers. The three-yearly training for staff is provided either by ESCB, an external welfare agency acceptable to ESCB, or those who are DSLs within the school and have up-to-date inter-agency training.

The school is committed to developing effective links with relevant agencies and cooperating as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters. It is especially important that school understands its role in the three safeguarding partner arrangements (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area (any part of which falls) within the local authority area). The school will deal appropriately and immediately with every suggestion or complaint of abuse. Any allegation or suspicion of abuse, from within or outside the school, will be managed in accordance with this policy and, in all proper circumstances, will be referred to an external agency for investigation. The school will not undertake its own investigations of allegations without prior consultation with the LADO(s), or in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In borderline cases, discussions with the LADO(s) can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.

For children in need, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and for children at risk, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care immediately. They have a duty to respond. Staff should also be alert to any child who may benefit from early help assessment. The DSL has the responsibility to take the lead in matters of an early help assessment. In particular, staff should be alert to the potential need for an early help assessment for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)

- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is a privately fostered child.

Detailed information on early help can be found in Chapter 1 of WTSC 2023.

### **Mental Health**

Holmwood House School and Nursery school takes the mental health of its pupils seriously (and as such has 2 staff trained in Mental Health First Aid). All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

More information can be found in: [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#)

The DSLs and staff must be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. The DfE guidance 'information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (see link in Appendix 2) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

Where there is a concern about a member of staff, the referral will be made to the local authority designated officer, or team of officers (LADO) within one working day. Other agencies may be contacted, such as the child protection unit of the police (CPU) or the NSPCC, in accordance with the procedures published by ESCB. If a crime has been committed, the matter will be reported to the police and, in cases of serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset.

When following up incidents, disclosures or allegations, staff will consider the welfare of all children. Where it is deemed necessary to speak with pupils, those involved will be offered the option of having another adult present. Where allegations are of a serious nature, parents or guardians will routinely be invited to attend, unless the allegation is of a nature where their presence may cause greater upset or jeopardise any possible police action.

### **Record keeping**

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately. If the latter is the case, the school's record-keeping will include an explanation of why it was considered that the threshold for referral was not met.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

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

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

These records are kept on *MyConcern* or in written form. The school ensures that all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.

On making a referral, the school can expect the local authority to make a decision within one working day about the type of response that is required, letting the referrer know the outcome. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services; and
- further specialist assessments are required in order to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The school should follow the matter up with the local authority if information is not forthcoming.

For further information on action to be taken in relation to safeguarding concerns staff can refer to the flowchart on page 22 of KCSIE 2023.

The school maintains and operates practices which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations. In this respect, the school acknowledges the

updated guidance provided in Part 4 of the DfE document KCSIE (September 2023).

The school ensures safe recruitment practices are carried out and that key staff have undertaken safer recruitment training, this needs to be renewed every five years. All interview panels will include at least one person who has undertaken such training.

The school takes all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances permit.

The school ensures that the duty of care towards pupils and staff is promoted, by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and assists staff to monitor their own standards and practice.

The school has a culture of safety and reflective practice, where staff are valued and concerns can be raised, including about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. Its whistleblowing policy is available as part of the employment manual. Staff are made familiar with the policy through staff training. Whistleblowing is covered in the school's staff code of conduct and its programme of induction for new staff. The Whistleblowing Policy is available separately to those who work or volunteer at the school, but are not employees of the school.

The school operates robust and sensible health and safety and fire protection procedures.

The school is alert to the medical needs of all children (particularly those with specific requirements).

Where an allegation is made against an individual not directly employed by the school, and where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, the school will ensure allegations are dealt with properly, including liaison with the LADO to establish a suitable outcome. Schools should seek the support of governance to establish appropriate steps. The agency responsible for the individual should be involved, although the school should lead, and ensure that the individual subject to the allegation receives appropriate support, either through union or colleague representation. The support of the LADO should be assisted to advise on information sharing. The school should ensure that agencies and their staff are aware of the procedures for managing allegations.

## **IN THE EVENT OF AN ALLEGATION OR A DISCLOSURE BY A CHILD, THE FOLLOWING WILL BE CONSIDERED:**

### **a) INITIAL COMPLAINT**

A member of staff suspecting, or hearing a complaint of, abuse:

- Must listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind.
- Must not take a decision as to whether or not abuse has taken place.
- Must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer. "Use the TED Questions" formula below.

- Must reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality.
- Must explain the need to pass the information to a DSL, who will ensure that the correct action is taken.
- Must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record must include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials.
- Must keep the record secure and hand it to the DSL.

TED Questions:

**T**ell me about this

**E**xplain what happened

**D**escribe this to me

#### b) PRESERVING EVIDENCE

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

#### c) REPORTING

A member of staff needs only reasonable cause for concern in order to act. One sentence from the child, indicating abuse or non-accidental injury, provides staff with reasonable grounds and is sufficient for them to act. This may also apply if clear information comes from a sibling or another adult. The collation of what may seem to be 'minor' concerns may lead to a bigger picture and the referral by the DSL to the Children and Families Hub and/or a criminal investigation; it is in the best interests of pupils for staff to report any concern, however minor, if they are in any doubt. However, as many of the signs of child abuse are also commonly associated with other medical, social or psychological problems, a member of staff may naturally wish to discuss some initial concerns with the DSL. All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported only to the DSL, or if it involves the DSL, to the DDSL, who will liaise with the Headteacher, (unless the Headteacher is the subject of the suspicion or complaint) as soon as is practicably possible and at latest by the end of the day, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map\* to record), giving the date, time and location using either *MyConcern* or a pink slip (available from the staff rooms). All records will be dated (and signed if a paper copy) and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the DSL (or DDSL), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly

\*Use of a body map should not be seen as an encouragement for staff to conduct their own investigation and staff should not seek to examine parts of a child's body that would not normally be visible.

**Any member of staff can also refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Children and Families Operations Hub. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the school and nursery to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support.**



Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be referred to the Children and Families Hub via the Essex Effective Support portal.

d) ACTION BY THE DSL:

The DSL will contact the Children and Families Operations Hub by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the SET procedures (ESCB, updated 2022) and in 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2021) if he or she believes a child may be in need or at risk of significant harm and will follow this up with a written referral using the Children and Families Request for Support form (Essex Effective Support portal) within 48 hours. Essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral plus any other relevant information or advice given.

If appropriate, the child may well be told what action is being taken and what will happen next. Allegations against someone in a position of trust are the only cases that must be reported to the LADO. If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the DSL may consult with appropriate professionals on an informal basis.

The DSL's options for action include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes
- an early help assessment or
- a referral for statutory services, for example, as the child might be in need, is in need, or suffering or likely to suffer harm

Action taken may also include:

- Sharing information with the Headteacher, safeguarding governor, Group Education director or DDSL
- Contacting the parents or carers
- Calling an internal pastoral meeting to discuss the situation – all appropriate persons would be invited (*e.g. tutor, head of pastoral care, school wellbeing team*). At this point a pastoral care plan may be instigated.

The action to be taken will take into account:

- The Holmwood House Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy.
- The procedures published by ESCB
- The nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. Any complaint involving serious harm or a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the Children and Families Operations Hub, the LADO (if the person under suspicion is in a position of trust) and the police without further investigation within the school.
- The wishes of the pupil, who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times, if the pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil's wishes. The welfare of the child is paramount.

- The wishes of parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. However, parental consent is not required for referrals to statutory agencies. This may be the necessary course of action after all appropriate consultation.
- Any concern from the DSL that disclosing information to parents would put a child at risk. In this case, he or she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose.
- Duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.
- The lawful rights and interests of the school community as a whole including its employees and its insurers.

#### e) REFERRAL GUIDELINES

When deciding whether to make a referral, following an allegation or suspicion of abuse, the Headteacher and DSL should not make their own decision over what appear to be borderline cases, but rather the doubts and concerns should be discussed with the Children and Families Operations Hub. This may be done tentatively and without giving names in the first instance by requesting a Consultation. What appears trivial at first can later be revealed to be much more serious, and an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. Thus the school should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse. However, if sufficient concern develops that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, a referral will be made without delay.

Contact will be made with the Children and Families Operations Hub within 24 hours of a disclosure being made. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the DSL will confirm the referral in writing within 24 hours of the initial telephone call. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the DSL will contact the Children and Families Operations Hub.

**Contextual Safeguarding:** Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the DSL or deputy need to consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Known as contextual safeguarding, this simply means that assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to the child's safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [contextual safeguarding](#)

#### f) ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS OR THE Headteacher

When dealing with allegations against the Headteacher, staff, supply staff or volunteers, the school aims to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse, placing children first, and the need to protect the Headteacher, staff, supply staff and volunteers from false or unfounded

allegations. When deciding on whether to proceed the school should take note of the Harm Test.

The school will follow the guidance in Part 4 of KCSIE (September 2023) and in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (ESCB, updated 2022) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information on this. Part 4 of KCSIE is now separated into two sections:

- Section One includes detailed guidance on allegations which meet the harms threshold, and:
- Section Two includes guidance for low level concerns. Even those concerns which do not meet the harm threshold should be shared with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately.

### **Low-level concerns**

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

We work hard to create a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. This should:

- encourage an open and transparent culture
- enable us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
- minimise the risk of abuse, and
- ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

### **What is a low-level concern?**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

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

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

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be

in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

Low level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the Headteacher, or a member of the senior leadership team. Staff are also encouraged to self-refer where, for instance, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or on reflection feel they may have compromised the School's expected professional standards. Reports about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

The Headteacher will investigate the concern, speaking to the person who raised the concern, the individual involved, and any witnesses. The action to be taken will be determined by and proportionate to the nature of the incident, whether the report can be substantiated and whether any pattern of behaviour appears to be emerging. Support will be offered where appropriate and where needed to enable the member of staff in question to correct their behaviour in future.

The Head must record all low level concerns in writing, including details of:

- The concern,
- The context of the report,
- The name of the individual sharing the concern (requests for anonymity should be respected as far as reasonably possible);
- Action taken and the rationale for this

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the pupil or pupils concerned and the need for a full and fair investigation. Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Headteacher, the DSL will report to and consult immediately with the Safeguarding Governor, relevant Education Director and/or proprietor, according to availability. This will be done without consultation with the Headteacher. The Safeguarding Governor or relevant Education Director will make immediate contact with the LADO.

Where an allegation or complaint is made against staff, volunteers or the DSL, the Headteacher will be informed or, in his/her absence, the Safeguarding Governor, relevant Education Director and/or proprietor. SET procedures (ESCB, updated 2022) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Headteacher, senior named person or the Chair of Governors must inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on 03330 139 797 within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on

speaking to pupils and parents and HR. The school does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

If a decision is taken that a member of staff is suspended during the investigation the school recognises that this does not infer guilt. Under these circumstances any suspension is a 'neutral' act and no action should be viewed as an expression of opinion or judgement.

In the event of an allegation or complaint resulting in a member of staff being required not to come to school, because of suspension or other arrangements, where the school provides on-site accommodation for such a member of staff, he or she would be required to live off-site during this time. If it were not possible for offsite accommodation to be sourced by the member of staff, then the school would ensure suitable accommodation is provided.

In the event of any person (in any capacity, whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) leaving the school as a result of their being considered unsuitable to work with children, or who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to children, the school will report this to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) promptly, within one working week. This applies equally to anyone who would have been removed from the school had he or she not left earlier. The school recognises that the proprietors of independent schools have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but do not have to find it from other sources.

A referral will be made to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons for such a referral include situations where the member of staff has been dismissed for unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence. The school need only take this action if the matter has not been reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service; all matters reported to the DBS will be shared with TRA. A referral to the DBS would be undertaken on the advice of the LADO. Advice about whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to refer to the TRA can be found in 'Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (October 2015)'. Further guidance is published on the TRA website.

The school will follow the guidance in Part 4 of the DfE document KCSIE (September 2023) to ensure that:

- Procedures are applied with common sense and judgement (whereas before schools had to follow the required procedures closely)
- Allegations found to be malicious are removed from personnel records (whereas before all allegations had to be retained)
- Records are kept of all other allegations but any that are not substantiated, are unfounded or malicious should not be referred to in employer references (whereas before details of all allegations had to be passed on in references).

Further detail with regards to the procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff are available from the School.

- Where a teacher's employer, including an agency, dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, they must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency). Details about how to make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency

#### g) ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PUPILS (including Child -on-Child abuse)

The school takes a firm line in relation to all possible child-on-child abuse. It can take on many forms, including:

- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling
- otherwise causing physical harm
- consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes semi-nudes images and/or videos [previously known as sexting]
- initiating/hazing type violence and rituals

With regard to sexual violence and sexual harassment, the school pays due regard to Part 5 of KCSIE (September 2023). The school holds and promotes a clear view that sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

The school's procedures in relation to child-one-child abuse follow the DfE advice to adopt a "whole school" approach, involving all staff, pupils, governors and parents, as part of the school's broad approach to safeguarding. Central to such an approach are (i) staff training so that staff know what to do if they have a concern about a child and (ii) a planned curriculum and extra-curricular programme, including assemblies, which takes a preventative approach through the setting of values and standards and the promotion of the fundamental British values, notably in this context, of respect and tolerance. Through the wider curriculum, including including Relationships Education (Primary), Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary) and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education), the school aims to provide pupils with an understanding appropriate to their age and stage of development of issues such as:

- healthy and respectful relationships
- what respectful behaviour looks like
- consent
- gender roles, stereotyping, equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- prejudiced behaviour
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment are always wrong
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children or a group of children of any age and sex. They may be physical and/or verbal and may occur online and offline. Children who are victims will likely find the experience stressful and distressing and their educational attainment could be negatively affected. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and the school will take all matters seriously and offer victims appropriate support. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. In particular, reports will not be allowed to be passed off, either by pupils or staff, as;

- banter
- just having a laugh
- part of growing up
- boys being boys

Research shows that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence or harassment and more likely that boys are the perpetrators. Children with SEND are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Such behaviour must be challenged, since it is normalised by being dismissed or tolerated.

**Definitions:** In this context, *sexual violence* is as defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003. *Sexual harassment* is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur wholly online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to:

- violate a child's dignity
- make him or her feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated
- create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. It can include:

- sexual comments, (such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names)
- sexual "jokes" or taunting
- physical behaviour, (such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature)
- online sexual harassment, (which may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence). It may include:
  - o non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos\*.
  - o sexualised online bullying
  - o unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media)
  - o sexual exploitation (coercion and threats).
- upskirting; this is now a criminal offence, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

\* UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) sexting advice provides detailed advice for schools and colleges on the sharing of nude and semi nude images (sexting) (refer to links in Appendix 2).

*Harmful sexual behaviour* is a term used to describe behaviour which is beyond that which is normal and developmentally expected, and can be problematic, abusive or violent. It can occur online and/or offline and should be considered in a child protection context. For further information, refer to the NSPCC guidance (see link in Appendix 2).

**Handling a concern:** A pupil reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment will be offered support and every effort will be made to ensure that his or her education is not disrupted. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex, requiring difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Staff are provided with training to facilitate a calm and considered response to any concern.

A member of staff who receives a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will take action in line with the standard guidance for dealing with disclosures, as identified in this policy. As with all concerns about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. The child making the report will be reassured, supported, taken seriously and kept safe. He or she should never be given the impression that reporting causes a problem, or be made to feel ashamed for making a report. In some cases, a third party, such as a friend, rather than the victim, may make the report. In such cases the same procedures will be followed, and it is important that the school understands why the victim has chosen not to make the report personally. Children may not find it easy to tell staff about abuse. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to, or staff may overhear a conversation. If staff have **any** concerns about welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

In overseeing the management of the concern, the DSL will consider, in line with overall safeguarding guidance, whether a referral should be made to children's social care and, where a crime may have been committed, will make a referral to the police.

The principles for handling a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment remain the same if the incident is alleged to have taken place off the school premises, or to have involved pupils from more than one school. In the latter case, appropriate information sharing and effective multi-agency working are especially important.

If possible, a report will be managed with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the DSL or deputy). However, this might not always be possible. The DSL should be informed as soon as practically possible, if he or she is not involved in the initial report. If the report involves illegal images of children, it is a key consideration that staff should not view or



forward such images. If viewing such an image is unavoidable, the UKCCIS advice (see link in Appendix 2) provides more details on what to do.

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

- the victim, especially his or her protection and support
- the alleged perpetrator
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school

The risk assessment will be recorded and kept under constant review. Full details of the matters for the DSL to consider in managing a report are given in paragraph 61 onwards of the DfE guidance cited above. In summary these are:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how he or she wants to proceed
- the nature of the alleged incidents
- the ages and developmental stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children
- whether the incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- any ongoing risks to the victim
- any other related issues and wider context

The school's or college's initial response to a report is incredibly important, as it can encourage or undermine the confidence of further victims in coming forward.

There are four likely scenarios for schools and colleges to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school or college should decide on a course of action. Consideration should be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).

The four scenarios are:

1. **Manage internally.** In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school or college may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or that referrals need to be made to statutory services and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour policy and by providing pastoral support.

2. **Early help assessment.** The school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from an early help assessment. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. An Early help assessment can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the Early Help process is and how and where to access support. More information on Early Help is set out on Page 17 of KCSIE 2023 with full details of the early help process in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: a school could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and perpetrator(s).

3. **Referrals to children's social care.** Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, schools and colleges should make a referral to local children's social care. At the point of referral to children's social care, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.

If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school or college (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support

Schools and colleges should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school or college. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school or college takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment, as per paragraph 479-481 of KCSIE 2022, will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all children at the school or college should be immediate.

In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school or college (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.

**4. Reporting to the Police.** Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above). It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator(s) is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.

Where a report has been made to the police, the school or college should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. At this stage, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school or college is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.

In some cases, it may become clear very quickly that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the school or college continue to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

The police will consider what action to take to manage the assessed risk of harm. This could involve the use of police bail with conditions, prior to a suspect appearing in court, or court bail with or without conditions after the first appearance. Alternatively, the person suspected of an offence could be 'released under investigation' (RUI). People released under RUI can have no conditions attached to their release from custody and it is possible for a person on bail also to have no conditions. Whatever arrangements are in place, the school or college will need to consider what additional measures may be

necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within their institution. Particular regard should be given to: the additional stress and trauma that might be caused to a victim within the institution; the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness; the need to ensure that any risk management measures strike a balance between management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc). Careful liaison with the police investigators should help to develop a balanced set of arrangements.

There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. Schools and colleges should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other children in the school or college. The risk assessment as per paragraph 479-481 in KCSIE will help inform any decision.

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school or college should update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school or college and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process should include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remains in the same school or college as the victim, the school or college should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school or college thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school or college. It will be important that the school or college ensure both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school or college should continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Schools and colleges should discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. The alleged perpetrator(s) is also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

**Supporting the victim; further guidance:** Further information and useful links to additional documentation can be found in paragraphs 530-539 in KCSIE 2023.

**Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator:** Due consideration will be given to the support and safeguarding needs of the alleged perpetrator. Children abusing other children may be a sign they have been abused

themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of the school. The school will consider the balance of safeguarding the victim and providing the alleged perpetrator with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implementing any disciplinary sanctions. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will take account of the age and developmental stage of the perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations.

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the school during the investigation, as determined by the Headteacher in discussion with the DSL. Careful liaison with children's social care and the police, as appropriate, will aim to ensure that any action taken by the school will not prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. It is also important to remember that, as a child, any alleged perpetrator is entitled to, deserving of, and should be provided with, a high level of support to help understand and overcome the reasons for such behaviour and help protect other children by limiting the likelihood of abusing again. The school will work with professionals as appropriate to provide support and to help alleged perpetrators understand and overcome the reasons for their behaviour and help protect other children by limiting the likelihood of them abusing again. Disciplinary action and appropriate support are not mutually exclusive; they can and should occur at the same time, where necessary.

In addition to the procedures in this policy, the school's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm.

Schools should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. Children and young people that have a health need arising from sexual assault or abuse can access specialist NHS support from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre 113 (SARC). SARCs offer confidential and non-judgemental support to victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse. They provide medical, practical, and emotional care and advice to all children and adults, regardless of when the incident occurred.

More information on harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) can be found at paragraphs 454-458 of KCSIE 2023, 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children at schools and colleges'. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police. The NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC Learning - Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework

A useful case study explaining issues around the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes can be found on page 126 of KCSIE 2023.

**Working with parents:** The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence, though this might not be necessary or

proportional in the case of sexual harassment. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The exception to this requirement is if there is a reason to believe that informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk. Careful consideration, based, where appropriate, on advice from relevant agencies, will be given to what information is provided to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when this is provided. Further details on working with parents can be found in paragraphs 546-551 in KCSIE 2023.

**Safeguarding other children:** The school will consider carefully the safeguarding needs of other children, particularly any who may need support due to having witnessed sexual violence. Following an incident, it is likely that other children will 'take sides' and the school will be vigilant to do all it can to ensure that the victim, alleged perpetrator and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed, including via social media.

#### h) SUSPECTED HARM FROM OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL:

A member of staff who suspects that a pupil is suffering harm from outside the school should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions (see TED questions, in a), above). A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and given to the DSL for child protection.

### **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

The school is part of Operation Encompass. Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school about **all** police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children PRIOR to the start of the next school day.

Once a Key Adult (DSL) has attended either an Operation Encompass briefing or completed the online Operation Encompass Key Adult training they will cascade the principles of Operation Encompass to all other school staff and Governors. All schools staff and Governors can undertake the online training. Our DSL undertook training in July 2021.

Our parents are fully aware that we are an Operation Encompass school and we ensure that when a new child joins our school the parents/carers are informed about Operation Encompass.

The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.

As a staff we have discussed how we can support our children who are experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse on a day-to-day basis and particularly following the Operation Encompass notification. We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk.

The DSL will report on Operation Encompass in the termly report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.

When the DSL leaves the school and other staff are appointed, they will ensure that all Operation Encompass login details are shared and that the new member of staff will undertake the Operation Encompass online training.

#### i) PUPILS WITH SEND

Children with SEND can face additional Safeguarding challenges and there may be additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This may include

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood or injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying without showing any outward signs
- Children with SEND being unable to communicate instances of possible abuse

The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies make specific reference to dealing appropriately with SEND. Staff should be vigilant in relation to the bulleted points above, reporting any concerns to the DSL.

#### j) CHILDREN WHO ARE LESBIAN, BI, GAY OR TRANS

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum

#### k) LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The school's governance ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and previously looked after children (since they remain vulnerable) safe. In

particular, this involves ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Staff should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The DSL should have details of the child's social worker.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children. Where there is a looked after, or previously looked after child at the school, a designated teacher will be appointed, who will work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of such pupils. The school has appointed Francesca Bradbury as designated teacher for looked after children. She will also have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. The school will provide appropriate training for such a role.

## **5. SUPPORTING THE PUPIL AT RISK**

The school recognises that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. However, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant and they may be withdrawn.

The school will endeavour to support the child through:

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The PSHCE programme, through which pupils will, according to their age and stage of development, learn to develop a healthy, safer lifestyle by being able to:
  - Recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly.



- Judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable.
  - Recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being and develop effective ways of resisting pressure, including knowing when and where to get help.
  - Be assertive to help resist unhelpful pressure.
  - Understand the law on child on child abuse is there to protect them rather than criminalise them.
  - Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people.
  - The government has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Mental Health and Behavior in School The Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance sets out how schools and colleges can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school/college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of their pupils.
- 
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
  - The school behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable and that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
  - The PSHE programme, assemblies and other occasions, together with the watchfulness of staff and the training they receive, in respect of issues such as mental health, body image, eating disorders, female genital mutilation (FGM), self-harm and radicalisation. (refer also to Section 15)
  - Liaison with other agencies who support the pupil such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
  - The school understands that it has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. See previous point
  - All children know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried, including their tutor, class teacher, (key worker and room leader at the nursery), any member of staff, the Wellbeing Team, their parents and the independent listeners for boarders, Mrs Jane Tuckwell (former Head of Pre-Prep) and Rev Mark Wallace. In particular:
    - All pupils at the school have access to a telephone helpline, enabling them to call for support in private.
    - Every child has a diary which contains guidance on where to turn for advice, including confidential helplines and web addresses for external specialists such as ChildLine.
    - Outside the surgery, advice is displayed on where pupils can seek help. These include details of Childline.
    - We operate a buddy system, which encourages the older pupils to look out for their younger peers.

- Our Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality deals with the issue in more depth.
- Close monitoring of attendance, identifying patterns and concerns relating to children missing from school.
- The careful vetting of the visiting speakers to ensure that the content of what they intend to say is appropriate in relation to the school's ethos and fundamental British values.
- Drawing up a child protection plan, in consultation with other agencies, if appropriate, to identify strategies to assist a child.
- Keeping records and notifying the Children and Families Operations Hub, as appropriate, as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.
- The appropriate transfer of information to the next school or setting when a pupil on the child protection register leaves the school. If the school does not know where the pupil has moved to, the Essex Designated Officer will be contacted as soon as possible.
- The appropriate transfer of information to a new school or setting when a pupil leaves the school whenever the school has recorded child protection concerns.
- When required, the school will contribute to inter-agency working, as noted in the statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*, providing, for example, an offer of help and/or by contributing towards an inter-agency assessment, in accordance with the Children Act 1989, to ensure a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified. The school will contribute to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans and will allow access for Children's Social Care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a Section 17 or Section 47 assessment. For further information see KCSIE (September 2023), paragraphs 17 and 31 and *Working Together to Safeguard Children December 2023*; (see links in this policy in Appendix 2).

The school recognises the requirement, from October 2015, for teachers\* to report to the police any cases or suspected cases of FGM. Nevertheless, all staff should liaise with the DSL with regard to any concerns about FGM (unless there is a reason not to do so). The police will be informed and Children's Social Care involved, as appropriate. At no time will staff examine pupils to confirm this.

\* "Teachers", here refers to anyone undertaking 'teaching work', as defined in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012, as explained in the ISI commentary on the regulations. This definition includes such persons as teaching assistants, sports coaches and visiting instrumental music staff.

## **6. A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

The school recognises the need to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. To facilitate this, the school will:

- Assess school activities and all areas of the school for risk and keep records.
- Ensure appropriate security at all points of access to the premises

- Not lock internal doors in areas being used by pupils;
- Fit, where possible, glass panels into the doors of classrooms, music practice rooms and other appropriate areas.
- Ensure all staff wear blue staff lanyards with a photo ID.
- Ensure that all visitors to the school are required to sign in at reception on arrival. Visitors will be required to wear their identity badges or be issued with school visitor badges upon verification of their identity. Visitor badges are either on green lanyards, for visitors who have been DBS checked and can move around the school unsupervised; or red lanyards for visitors who have not been DBS checked and need to be escorted around the site by a member of staff.
- Lexden Springs Squash Club members that are using the swimming pool during the school day are issued with a yellow lanyard at the squash club before entering the school site to access the swimming pool. At key times of the school day, when pupils are around the site (for example, break and lunch times) a member of the Squash Club staff must accompany members to and from the swimming pool.
- Ensure that staff are vigilant and will either report unidentified visitors immediately to the school office or challenge the person directly if safe to do so. At times when the office is closed, staff should alert the Headteacher or other senior staff on duty.
- Be aware that there are occasionally times when large numbers of unknown visitors may be on site (e.g. fixtures, open mornings, plays or concerts). On these occasions, it is not expected that all these visitors will wear badges and only visitors found in areas inappropriate to the event or whose behaviour causes concern will be reported or challenged.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the 'Policy for management, including identification, of visitors into the school site', as outlined in the 'Health and Safety Policy'
- The school and the governors should ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes:
  - being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
  - understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner but 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.
  - for schools, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harms test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal

advice. (A person satisfies the harm test if they **may harm a child or vulnerable adult** or put them at risk of harm. It is something a person may do to cause harm or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

## 7. THE DSL

The school has appointed an experienced and suitably qualified member of staff who is the member of the Senior Leadership Team as DSL to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare and DDSLs with similar training, to act in their absence and take the lead should an allegation be made against the DSL.

Mrs Francesca Bradbury, our Deputy Head and member of the Senior Leadership Team, is our Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Prep, Pre-Prep and Reception classes of EYFS, as well as Holmwood House Nursery. Miss Bethan Ashton, Head of Prep Prep and EYFS, and Mr Edmund Cook, Head of Juniors, are the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who deputise for the DSL in her absence and during boarding at Holmwood House School. At the nursery, Karen Travers is the DSL and is supported by Vicki Shreeve, Michelle Evans, Charlotte Taylor and Claire Cutts (DDSLs). The nursery DSL is required to seek further guidance and support from the school's DSL. This 'working together' is aimed at ensuring consistency of approach across both settings. The DSL and DDSL can be contacted via the school office (01206 574305) or the nursery DSL and DDSL (01206 273827).

The school's records on child protection are kept electronically using the online safeguarding software, MyConcern. Any paper documents and historical data are kept locked in the Deputy Head's office and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the DSL, her deputy and the Headteacher. At the nursery, all safeguarding records are locked in a filing cabinet with the children's individual files and access is restricted to the nursery manager, the DSL and DDSLs. The policy and practices are reviewed annually by a member of the board with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding.

The DSL and deputies develop a complete safeguarding picture and are the most appropriate people to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns. The responsibilities of the DSL and DDSLs are provided in job descriptions specific to this aspect of their school role. They include;

- Being conversant with ESCB procedures and the role of other agencies.
- Following the school's safeguarding & child protection policies and co-ordinating child protection procedures in the school.
- Being the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection.
- Consulting with the Children and Families Operations Hub, or LADO, as appropriate, on issues if an allegation or suspicion occurs and liaising with the various child protection agencies where appropriate.

- The DSL should use NPCC- When to call the police to help them understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.
- Keeping the Headteacher informed of all actions unless the Headteacher is the subject of a complaint. In this situation, the DSL should consult with the Safeguarding Governor, relevant Education Director or proprietor.
- Co-operating with any police and LADO investigations.
- Represent the school at, and submit a report to, any child protection conference called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s)/carer(s). Whoever attends will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.
- If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the school is part of the core group, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the designated safeguarding lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.
- Liaising with the Headteacher, Safeguarding Governor and relevant Education Director regarding training for all who work at the school on child protection issues.
- Attending appropriate higher level training every two years supplemented by informal updates as required, but at least annually.
- Undertaking training to facilitate the recognition of the additional risks that children with SEND face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and ensure confidence in the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online".
- Keeping appropriate records, sharing these with agencies as and when appropriate. Data protection considerations must not be a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm.
- Having a role in the oversight of the school's e-safety provision, the teaching of online safety and the quality of the school's filtering and monitoring.
- The DSL must have details of any social worker linked to a child in the school.
- Supporting staff.
- Take responsibility, when a child leaves the school, for ensuring that the child protection file is transferred securely to the new school as soon as possible and obtaining confirmation of receipt. Such a transfer of information should be separate from the main pupil file. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in

advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. Such files should be sent to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of a new term. As a recipient of a child protection file from a previous school, the DSL must ensure that key staff, including the SENCO, are made aware as required.

- The DSL should liaise with the headteacher to inform them of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, and DSLs (and their deputies) will need to familiarise themselves with this document.
- The DSL has responsibility for “understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place” as part of their remit.

[See the DSL Job Description Appendix 6]

## **8. HELPING A CHILD WHO WANTS TO TELL YOU ABOUT ABUSE**

Staff should remember that the priority is to protect the child;

- Take the matter seriously
- React calmly and listen carefully
- Observe but do not judge
- Don't stop the child who is freely recalling significant events
- Reassure the child that he or she has done the right thing in telling you
- Indicate the action you will take and make it clear that you will have to tell the DSL (you cannot promise confidentiality - no secrets)
- If the child comes back to talk at a later stage, don't comment or advise; ensure that you listen, record and reassure the child.

As a member of staff, it is essential to remember not to:

- Drag the child to the DSL – this could be interpreted as abusive in itself!
- Contact the parents yourself
- Interrogate the child or ask leading questions
- Speak to anyone about whom allegations are made, including colleagues
- Promise confidentiality
- Ask a child outright if he or she or others have suffered abuse
- Criticise the alleged perpetrator.

## **9. TEN KEY POINTS TO FOLLOW IF YOU SUSPECT, OR ARE TOLD OF, ABUSE:**

The following guidelines, compiled by Dr Roger Morgan OBE (former Children's Rights Director), may be helpful:

Adults looking after children or young people in schools (or in residential establishments or youth organisations) should be aware of the risks of abuse (by adults or other young people), and take steps to reduce those risks. Adults

(staff or volunteers) in charge of children or young people should know what to do if they suspect that someone is being abused, or if someone tells them that this is happening. The following key points give a guide on what to do and not to do:

1. Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. If you can, write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking (these may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said) – and keep your original notes, however rough and even if you wrote on the back of something else, (it's what you wrote at the time that may be important later – not a tidier and improved version you wrote up afterwards). If you don't have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards.
3. Do not give a guarantee that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – if you are told about abuse, you have the responsibility to tell the right people to get something done about it (see below). If asked, explain that you are going to tell the people who can provide help, but that you will only tell people who absolutely have to know.
4. Don't ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what might have happened (e.g. *"did he do X to you?"*) – just ask *"what do you want to tell me?"* or *"is there anything else you want to say"*. Refer to the TED questions in 4(a) above.
5. Immediately tell the DSL (unless they are themselves accused or suspected of abusing, in which case this must be reported to the Headteacher) – don't tell other adults or young people what you have been told.
6. Discuss with the DSL whether any steps need to be taken to protect the person who has told you about the abuse (this may need to be discussed with the person who told you).
7. Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc – social services and police staff are the people trained to do this – you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings.
8. As soon as possible the DSL should refer the matter to the local social services department (helped by your notes). Follow their requests about what to do next. They will set up any necessary investigations, and can advise you.
9. Never think abuse is impossible in your school or group, or that an accusation against someone you know well and trust is bound to be wrong.
10. Children and young people often tell other young people, rather than staff or other adults, about abuse – make sure that senior young people know how to behave if they suspect, or are told of abuse.

### **Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports**

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school or college should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy.

#### **10. SAFE WORKING PRACTICE within the CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF**

Staff, supply staff, volunteers and helpers need to think and act carefully to avoid situations that could lead to difficulties or embarrassment or accusations. The following points are intended to provide some guidance:

- All who work with children must ensure that the children feel equally valued; favouritism, real or inferred, causes feelings of alienation and can be misconstrued.
- Staff who have concerns about the conduct of others, in respect of their engagement with children, should have the confidence that they are safe to raise their concerns and their view will be taken seriously. Staff should refer to and follow the procedures detailed in the whistleblowing policy, found in the employment manual.
- Staff should not take children out on their own and refrain from forming personal relationships exclusively with one individual.
- Staff should take care that any electronic communication with pupils is wholly appropriate, does not constitute a breach of trust and is in accordance with E-safety guidance included in Section 12 of this policy. Staff must not befriend pupils on social networking sites.
- Conversations and behaviour should be friendly but not over familiar. Young people are more comfortable with an adult in role than an adult who seeks to be 'one of the gang'.
- Responsible and appropriate use of authority provides stability and security.
- All children should be treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language use and actions.
- Respect the privacy of the children.
- Avoid questionable activity e.g. rough, sexually provocative games and comments.
- Ensure that correct safeguards are in place to cover 'one to one' situations. This may include individual coaching, instrumental music tuition, administering of first aid, nappy changing, conveying pupils by car, etc. One to one situations have the potential to make a child more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Adults working in one to one settings with pupils may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them.
- Make sure that the only people allowed into an activity are the adults assigned to the group. You should not allow others to have free access unless they have a specific reason e.g. guest speaker, maintenance person.
- Physical contact should reflect the child's need, not the adult's.
- Physical contact should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child not the adult.
- Physical contact should take place only in public.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.



- Any act of restraint involving physical contact must be recorded in writing (using the appropriate form which can be found in the staff room and Front Office) and the Headteacher or Deputy Head notified immediately. The Headteacher will notify parents on the same day, or as soon as practicable thereafter. In the event the Headteacher is involved this should be passed to the Safeguarding Governor, relevant Education Director or Proprietor. A record of such incidents will be kept.
- Physical contact must be in accordance with the school policy on reasonable force and physical restraint (**Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy**), further details of this can be found in Section 14 of this policy, below.
- Staff should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misunderstood.

More detailed information is available to all staff through the document 'Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people', (see Appendix 2) The guidance identifies many key areas where adults can protect themselves from allegations.

## **11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR REGISTERED SETTINGS**

The school will inform Ofsted (0300 123 4234) of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. This will take place as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days.

## **12. E-SAFETY POLICY**

### **Holmwood House School and EYFS**

Holmwood House believes in the educational benefits of curriculum Internet use. Good planning and management that recognises the risks will help to ensure appropriate, effective and safe pupil use. In delivering the curriculum, teachers need to plan to integrate the use of communications technology such as Google Classroom, Google Meets, Zoom, Kami and e-mail in order to enable pupils to learn how to locate, retrieve and exchange information using ICT. Computer skills are vital to access life-long learning and for future employment.

Most technologies present risks as well as benefits. Internet use for home, social and leisure activities is expanding and being used by all sectors of society. This brings young people into contact with a wide variety of influences, some of which could be unsuitable. It is important that schools, as well as parents, adopt strategies for the responsible and safe use of the Internet.

All governors (Education Directors) receive online safety information as part of their regular safeguarding and child protection training.

### **Core Principles of Internet Safety**

The Internet has become as commonplace as the mobile phone or TV and its effective use is an essential life-skill. Unmediated Internet access brings with it the possibility of placing pupils in embarrassing, inappropriate and even dangerous situations. This policy aims to help to ensure responsible use and the safety of pupils. It is built on the following four core principles:

**Content-** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-semitism, radicalisation and extremism.

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

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

**Commerce-** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>)

### **Guided educational use**

Significant educational benefits should result from curriculum internet use including access to information from around the world and the ability to communicate widely and to publish using a variety of media. Internet use should be planned, task-orientated and educational within a regulated and managed environment. Directed and successful Internet use will also reduce the opportunities for activities of dubious worth.

Staff are guided that, in relation to the age and maturity of the pupils (particularly, therefore, at primary and prep level), when setting a task, such as homework, which involves internet research, this must not simply be an open-ended request (such as 'find out six facts about Henry VIII'). Instead, staff will research suitable and safe websites where pupils can undertake their research and will provide the pupils with a selection of website addresses. Where possible, these are provided electronically as hyperlinks, to be sure that pupils are taken to the correct destination. Children are also taught to evaluate the content of a site and choose the one most appropriate to their needs.

### **Risk assessment**

21<sup>st</sup> Century life presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation from which children and young people need to be protected. At the same time they need to learn to recognise and avoid these risks – to become "Digitally literate". Pupils need to know how to cope if they come across inappropriate material.

### **Responsibility**

Internet safety depends on staff, schools, governors, advisers, parents and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves taking responsibility for the use of the Internet and associated communication technologies. The balance between education for responsible use, regulation and technical solutions must be judged carefully.

It is acknowledged that, whilst the school provides pupils with a protected environment for Internet usage in school, the pupils may not benefit from the same level of protection in their access to the Internet beyond the confines of the school. Important aspects of the school's e-safety provision are, therefore, the development of the pupils' understanding of keeping safe online when not at school, and supporting parents in understanding how to help keep their children safe online. The school provides Internet safety sessions periodically for parents to attend in order to help them ensure the safety of pupils at home.

**The Headteacher**, DSL and DDSLs are responsible for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe environment for internet use, for the implementation of policy and for the development of the pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe online, both in and out of school.

**The ICT Technician** is responsible for the maintenance of hardware and software systems and technology to ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, safe use of the internet.

**The teachers** are responsible for overseeing the successful development, both in ICT lessons and the wider curriculum and extra-curricular activities, of pupils' understanding of how to keep safe online and for supporting staff in implementing this objective.

**All staff and volunteers** are responsible for monitoring pupils' safety online and reporting any concerns arising from pupils' internet use, either at school or at home, and for supporting the development of the pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.

### **Regulation**

The use of a limited and expensive resource, which brings with it the possibility of misuse, must be regulated. In some cases access within school is denied, for instance unmoderated chat rooms present immediate dangers and are banned. Fair rules, clarified by discussion and prominently displayed help pupils make responsible decisions for both school and home access.

### **Appropriate strategies**

This document describes strategies to help to ensure responsible and safe use. They are based on limiting access, developing responsibility and on guiding pupils towards educational activities.

There are no straightforward or totally effective solutions and staff, parents and the pupils themselves must remain vigilant.

There is a wealth of information available to support schools, colleges and parents/carers to keep safe online. A useful list of resources can be found in KCSIE 2023 on pages 158-160.

### **1) The Importance of Internet Use**

- The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management information and business administration systems.
- Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils.
- The Internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> Century life for education, business and interaction. The school has a duty to provide students with quality Internet access as part of their learning experience.

### **2) How the Internet benefits education**

Benefits of using the Internet in education include:

- access to world-wide educational resources including museums and art galleries;
- educational and cultural exchanges between pupils world-wide;
- cultural, vocational, social and leisure use in libraries, clubs and at home;
- access to experts in many fields for pupils and staff;
- staff professional development through access to national developments, educational materials and good curriculum practice;
- communication with support services, professional associations and colleagues;
- improved access to technical support including remote management of networks.
- continuation of education when a child is off site for an extended period of time through remote learning

### **3) How Internet use enhances learning**

- The school Internet access is designed expressly for pupil use and will include filtering appropriate to the age of pupils.
- Pupils will be taught what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and given clear objectives for Internet use.
- Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities. Access levels will be reviewed to reflect the curriculum requirements and age of pupils.
- Staff will guide pupils in on-line activities that will support the learning outcomes planned for the pupils' age and maturity.
- Pupils will be educated in the effective use of the Internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location and retrieval.

### **4) Pupil's Understanding of how to keep safe online**

The school develops the pupils' understanding of how to keep safe online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, and their resilience in protecting themselves and their peers in the following ways:

- Subject and class teachers cover all aspects of e-Safety in ICT lessons
- Tutors/class teachers explain the ICT Acceptable Use Policy

- Tutors/class teachers require all pupils to sign the policy in their prep diaries
- PSHCE curriculum covers aspects of personal online safety
- All teachers reiterate the school policy on acceptable use of ICT
- Pupils are reminded about online safety regularly by staff whilst undertaking school-organised online learning out of school

### **5) Pupils' Evaluation of Internet content**

Inappropriate material should not be visible to pupils using the Web. This is not easy to achieve and cannot be guaranteed. It is a sad fact that pupils may be confronted with inappropriate material, despite all attempts at filtering. Pupils will be taught what to do if they experience material that they find distasteful, uncomfortable or threatening. For example, to close the page and report the URL to the teacher or ICT technician for inclusion in the list of blocked sites.

More often, pupils will be judging reasonable material but selecting that which is relevant to their needs, for instance to answer a homework question. Pupils should be taught research techniques including the use of subject catalogues and search engines. They will be encouraged to question the validity, currency and origins of information – key information handling skills. They should also use alternative sources of information for comparison purposes. Effective guided use will reduce the opportunity pupils have for exploring unsavoury areas. Using Internet derived materials in pupils' own work requires at least an understanding that straight copying is worth little without a commentary that demonstrates the selectivity used and evaluates significance. Respect for copyright and intellectual property rights, and the correct usage of published material needs to be taught. This may include covering relevant issues for schools through Relationships Education.

- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the ICT technician.
- The use of Internet derived materials by staff and by pupils in school must comply with copyright law.
- Pupils are taught to be critically aware of the materials they read and shown how to validate information before accepting its accuracy.
- Pupils will be taught to acknowledge the source of information and to respect copyright when using Internet material in their own work.

### **6) Management of email**

- Pupils may use only approved email accounts on the school system.
- Pupils must immediately tell a teacher if they receive offensive email or comments on social media platforms or documents that have been used collaboratively.
- Pupils must not reveal details of themselves or others, such as address or telephone number, or arrange to meet anyone when using online communication.
- Access in school to external personal email accounts is not allowed except where a teacher has specifically requested it for example to retrieve a piece of work emailed from home.

### **7) Management of School Media (Website and Social Media Accounts)**

- The point of contact on the Website is the school address/school email and telephone number.
- Staff or pupils' home information will not be published.
- Website photographs that include pupils will be selected carefully and will not enable individual pupils to be identified.
- Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on the Website, particularly associated with photographs.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school Website.
- The copyright of all material must be held by the school, or be attributed to the owner where permission to reproduce has been obtained.
- The school undertakes appropriate measures for the management of personal data which is stored electronically.

#### **8) Newsgroups and chat**

- Pupils will not be allowed access to public or unregulated chat rooms in school.
- Newsgroups will not be made available unless an educational requirement for their use has been demonstrated.
- A risk assessment will be carried out before pupils are allowed to use a new technology in school.

#### **9) Management of emerging Internet uses**

- Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before use in school is allowed.

#### **10) Authorisation for Internet access**

- At EYFS and Key Stage 1, access to the Internet will be by adult demonstration and with directly supervised access to specific, approved online materials.

#### **11) Liaison and partnership with parents**

- Parents have access to the school's e-safety policy on the school website and can request a paper copy from the school office.
- Parents will be informed that pupils will be provided with supervised Internet access.
- Parents and pupils will be asked to sign and return a consent form.
- Periodically the school runs e-safety information meetings for parents, which may involve an external speaker, in order to raise their awareness of e-safety matters and help them develop their children's safe use of the Internet. The school is aware of the need to communicate regularly with parents, carers and guardians about the importance of children being safe online whilst outside of school.
- Copies of template agreements for children and parents are found in Appendix 3 of this policy.

#### **12) Assessing the risks of Internet Use and Management of filtering**

- Governors (Education Directors) liaise with school leaders to ensure that all relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the filtering systems in place and that they are managed effectively. In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material

available via the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a school computer.

- The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:
  - o content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
  - o contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
  - o conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
  - o commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).
- Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be reviewed regularly.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the Internet policy is implemented and compliance with the policy monitored.
- The school will work in partnership with parents, the DfE and our Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.
- The school will ensure that appropriate IT filters and monitoring procedures are in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online without unreasonable 'overblocking'. Governance will ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Governing bodies and proprietors should consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.
- Bellevue Education's Head of Digital Development will review the standards and discuss with IT staff, the school's DSL and service providers what more needs to be done to support the school in meeting this standard outlined in paragraph 142 of KCSIE September 2023.
- Filtering and monitoring is carried out by GoGuardian. The filtering allows for devices to be monitored regardless of location (school or at home). Any breaches result in an automated email that is sent to the DSL, the Head of Juniors and the Senior Master, as well as the Head of IT, who then decide what actions need to be taken. The effectiveness of the

filter and monitoring software should be tested as part of governance reviews annually.

- The responsibility of the IT Lead and the technician as well as the type of filter being used should be listed in each school's Computing Policy.
- As part of the above, the school should consider carefully how to manage the access to 3G, 4G and 5G on the school premises.

### **13) Introduction of the policy to pupils**

- Rules for Internet access will be posted near all computer systems.
- Pupils will be informed that Internet use will be monitored.
- Instruction in responsible and safe use should precede Internet access.
- Pupils have a copy of the Acceptable Use of ICT in School guidelines in their prep diary, which they need to sign at the beginning of each year.

### **14) Staff consultation and training**

- The school will ensure that all staff have undertaken appropriate e-safety training including their applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to online filtering and monitoring
- All staff must have familiarised themselves fully with this policy before using any Internet resource in school.
- All staff, including teachers, supply staff, classroom assistants and support staff, will be provided with the School Internet Policy, and its importance explained.
- Staff development in the safe and responsible Internet use, and on school Internet policy will be provided as required. Induction training in safeguarding for new staff includes e-safety.

### **15) Technical provision, filters, safeguards and monitoring**

- Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our technical support can monitor pupils' use of the network.
- As part of Google Apps for Education, GoGuardian is our monitoring and filtering system which flags up any concerning search results and sends an email alert to IT administrators and Heads of Phase.
- Our technical support can monitor email traffic and block SPAM and certain attachments.
- We issue all pupils from Years 3 to 8 with their own personal school email address. Access is via personal login, which is password protected. We give guidance on the reasons for always logging off and for keeping all passwords securely.
- We have strong anti-virus protection on our network.
- Any pupil who wishes to connect a removable device to the school's network is asked to arrange in advance with the IT Technician to check it for viruses.
- The School's firewall/router is **Draytek Vigor 3910** (installed in 2023) which improves the performance, reliability and control of the network. This firewall is responsible for network security, but not monitoring or filtering of websites.
- As an additional measure, the new firewall uses a special DNS service provided by **Cloudflare** which broadly blocks access to all known adult content and malware websites which applies to all users and devices connected to the school network, even if they are not using GoGuardian.



### **16) Maintenance of ICT system security**

- The school ICT systems will be reviewed regularly with regard to security in conjunction with the IT Technician.
- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly by the IT Technician.
- Memory sticks and other such portable storage devices may be brought into school when specific permission has been given. Before being used on a school device they will be scanned for viruses by the IT technician.
- Unapproved system utilities and executable files will not be allowed in pupils' work areas or attached to email.

## **13. MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS POLICY**

### **1. Use of Cameras and the manipulation and storage of images**

In this policy terms such as 'photography', 'pictures', 'images', 'camera', 'device' and 'digital technology' include both still and video media. The term 'camera' includes mobile phones, ipads and other equipment which has the capacity to take photographs.

At Holmwood House Preparatory School we recognise that the appropriate use of photography enhances many aspects of school life and the pupils' education. Mobile phone technology has become more sophisticated over recent years and will continue to evolve. Wireless connections in particular, extend the capabilities of mobile phones further; which allow access to new content and services, such as the internet, social networking sites and instant messaging. Many mobile phones offer camera, video and audio recording as standard. Mobile phones, alongside other technologies, aim to change the way we communicate. This speed of communication often provides security and reassurance; however, as with any other form of technology, there are associated risks. Staff are aware that pupils can have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks. With this in mind, staff need to be aware that pupils may use this method to sexually harass other pupils, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually. In addition, there is a greater ease with which some pupils may access pornography and other harmful content.

This policy is intended to ensure an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used by providing a clear framework to ensure that

- the use of cameras and the storage of images reflect good practice
- the safeguarding needs of the pupils are met
- staff are not distracted from their work with children.

The policy also recognises that learning to use digital technology is an important part of the IT curriculum. Teaching needs to ensure that pupils are able to learn how to use digital cameras and to edit and store photographs with an understanding of safeguarding requirements, for themselves and others, which is appropriate for their age and taking due account of the cyber-bullying

aspects of the school's anti-bullying policy. Reference should also be made to the school's E-Safety Policy (see Section 12 above) policy, the Acceptable Use of IT Policies [staff and pupil] and planning for the internet safety topic in the IT/PSHCE scheme of work.

Photography is used at the school for a variety of purposes, including:

- Recording pupils' achievements, learning and progress.
- Contributing to each pupil's learning log.
- Providing evidence to support pupils' application for entrance/scholarship to their future schools.
- Recording school events and providing material for displays.
- Communication with parents, for example to help reassure new parents or carers of young children that they have settled well into school life and provide prompt information on their children's activities on residential trips.
- Communications with the school community (parents, pupils, staff, Governors and alumni) via weekly newsletters and the website,
- Internal displays (including clips of moving images) on digital and conventional notice boards within the school premises,
- For publicity purposes (brochures, prospectus, media articles, website etc.) for both the school and Bellevue Education Group.
- To support work undertaken by members of staff or students on placements for training and gaining further qualifications.

On their child's admission to the school, parents are asked to complete a Google consent form in relation to their child being photographed at school or during school events. The form provides for parents to give permission at different levels (for example to consent to their child being photographed to record achievement and progress, but not for publicity purposes).

Responses to the photography consent form are collated and the summary/analysis can be consulted at the school office/on Google drive. It is important that staff familiarise themselves with this information. If parents withhold consent for certain aspects of photography in relation to their child, this must be respected. Images should be checked to determine whether photographs have been taken which inadvertently include pupils for whom consent has not been given. If this is the case, images should be destroyed, cropped or otherwise edited to ensure that parental consent is respected. If an image is edited for this reason, the original must be destroyed.

The images that we use for displays and communications purposes never identify an individual pupil. Instead, they name the event, the term and year that the photograph was taken (for example, "First XV rugby team, Autumn Term 2011"). We only use images of school activities, such as plays, concerts, sporting fixtures, prize-giving, school trips etc in their proper context.

### **Use of Images: Internal Identification**

All pupils are photographed at yearly intervals, for the purposes of internal identification. These passport-sized photographs identify the pupil by:

- Name

- Tutor Group
- Year Group
- Element

They are securely stored in the password-protected area of the staff database, where access is restricted to academic, pastoral and school office staff. Any parent who so requests will be sent a copy of his or her son or daughter's photograph.

Periodically, professional photographers visit the school by arrangement to take portrait photographs and formal pictures of sports teams, etc. Care should be taken that parental consent is respected and also that parents have not unintentionally withheld consent regarding such photographs. Any areas of doubt should be discussed with the Headteacher, who will arrange for parents to be contacted as appropriate. It is not compulsory for pupils to be included in portrait and team photography, nor is there any obligation on parents to purchase the resulting photographs.

From time to time a teacher, student or trainee teacher on placement may undertake a case study of a child, for example, as part of a training course to gain a qualification. In such situations, parental consent with regard to photography must be respected. Case studies will only be undertaken following prior written consent from the parent or carer and, except by prior arrangement between the Headteacher and the parent/carers, the child's name will be changed in the case study to protect his or her identity.

Occasionally a photograph may be taken which inadvertently catches a pupil in an unfortunate, embarrassing or compromising position. If this is the case, the image and any copies of it must be destroyed immediately.

### **Tapestry**

Our online Learning Journey app (used at the nursery and in Reception year at the school) features photographs and videos of children as part of a weekly and sometimes daily update to parents. Parents have signed to give permission for their child(ren) to be included in this and security arrangements are in place to restrict access to the app.

### **Media Coverage**

As a school we are often featured in articles in the local press. We always endeavour to submit photographs to accompany our articles and these photos often feature our pupils, in accordance with the parental consent for media given upon joining Holmwood.

Increasingly we are asked for captions destined to be printed alongside our photos which include the names of the pupils shown in the photos. This is dealt with by contacting parents individually at the time this arises and by obtaining parental consent when a child first joins the school for the school to submit a child's name on the understanding that it may appear in print.

We will make every effort to ensure that children whose parents or guardians have refused permission for images of their children to be used are excluded

from events where the media are present. A list of those pupils whose parents have withheld consent is prepared by the marketing officer and shared with all staff.

We will always complain to the Press Complaints Council (PCC) if the media fails to follow the appropriate code of practice for the protection of young people, including the children of celebrities.

### **Photography by parents**

It is very difficult to police the use of cameras by parents, for example at prize-giving/Speech Day or on the touchline at sports fixtures. However, if members of staff have concerns about the suitability of photography by parents, they should consult DSL and/or the Headteacher, who will consider the situation with reference to this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures and take appropriate action. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.

We ask parents not to take photographs of other pupils on their own, without the prior agreement of that child's parents.

Flash photography can disturb others in the audience, or even cause distress for those with medical conditions; we therefore ask that it is not used at indoor events.

Parents are also reminded that copyright issues may prevent us from permitting the filming or recording of some plays and concerts.

We record some plays and concerts professionally. Copies of the DVDs and CDs are available for parents to purchase.

The parents' handbook includes guidelines for parents on the use of photography at school events.

Any parent who works at the school, for example as a volunteer, must abide by this policy. The teacher responsible (for example the Trip Leader for an educational visit which uses parent volunteers) must ensure that the parents involved are aware of this policy and abide by it.

If parents wish to make a video recording of a school event (nativity, concert, drama production etc), prior permission must be obtained from the Headteacher, who will consider the situation with respect to this policy and the levels of consent given by parents of other children involved. Since it is difficult to ensure that parental consent is respected in these situations, and not appropriate to share the details of consent given for particular children with other parents, the Headteacher may refuse permission for a video recording of the event to be made. As an alternative, the school may make an official video recording/DVD, the editing of which, before it is made available to parents, will ensure that parental consent is respected.

### **Use of equipment**

When possible school cameras/iPODs should be used to take images of pupils. Users bringing personal devices into the school must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device. Staff must ensure that this policy is observed when using other equipment which can be used in connection with photographs (photocopier, scanner, printer, ipads etc.)

When a school device is not available, teachers, when given permission by the Head, can use a personal device to take appropriate images of pupils for use on school social media accounts. It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that the images are transferred to the school media drive and deleted from their personal device as soon as possible, but no later than 1 week from the image being taken.

### **Editing and storage of photographs**

All images taken by members of staff or volunteers at school or on school activities remain the property of the school. The school may require images to be deleted or edited as appropriate and may also select images taken by members of staff or volunteers for other purposes, with due attention paid to the requirements of this policy.

When editing images, staff must take due professional care and ensure that edited images do not mislead or misrepresent. Care must also be taken to ensure that images do not result in their subject being vulnerable to embarrassment, teasing, bullying or abuse.

Close attention must be paid to the storage of images, particularly whilst kept on portable media such as flashcards and memory sticks. Staff are responsible for the security of such media and the images they contain and must take all reasonable measures to ensure that they are kept safe and do not come into the possession of unauthorised people.

Images must at all times be kept on school equipment and storage media and not transferred to personal devices or internet storage facilities.

All images must be stored permanently only in the school's photograph archive on the school intranet (except where they form part of other approved school documentation, such as a record of achievement, display, brochure or official website), where they will be monitored by the DSL and Headteacher. Once sorted and edited, images must be transferred to the archive and deleted from other personal and school equipment and temporary storage media.

To maintain security and enable subsequent users to work effectively, images on flash cards and other portable media must be deleted once they have been transferred. Similarly, where cameras have the capacity to save images without the need for a removable card, these must be deleted after use.

Unless specific prior consent has been obtained, members of staff and volunteers must not post school images on personal pages of social networking sites or other websites. The use of images on the school's official Facebook page, website and other approved sites is carefully monitored to ensure that it is in line with this policy and parental consent. The age limit for having a

Facebook account is 13 and other social networks have similar restrictions. However, parents do not always enforce these restrictions. Staff must be vigilant in respect of any inappropriate use by pupils of school images or their own photographs of school events on social networks and must report any concerns to the DSL.

The DSL is responsible for liaising with the chair of the parents' association (or other delegated member of the association) to ensure familiarity with this policy and that images used on the association's Facebook page and in newsletters and other literature and media abide by this policy and respect the levels of consent given by parents in respect of photography.

Final responsibility for the appropriate use of photography at school and in connection with school events rests with the Headteacher and the DSL. They monitor school images and may require an image to be deleted, edited or removed from a particular document, website etc in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

The school assesses the risk of access to archived images by inappropriate individuals to be very low. Staff and volunteers must ensure that their use and storage of images maintains a similarly acceptable level of risk.

## **2. Use of mobile phones by members of staff, supply staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors**

Mobile phones provide many benefits to school life, notably in improving health and safety through better communication with staff in more remote parts of the school campus and on off-site visits. However, mobile phones, particularly those capable of taking pictures, also present a challenge to the school community to ensure that pupils are safeguarded in relation to the potential for improper use and also that their education is not impeded by the use of mobile phones at inappropriate times.

Other than boarders, no pupil may bring a mobile phone to school. The boarders' handbook provides information on the use of mobile phones by boarders. Staff must be vigilant to ensure that the use of mobile phones, including their use by volunteers, visitors and pupils is always appropriate and that the safeguarding needs of the pupils are met. Any concerns should be discussed with the Headteacher or DSL. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately. Where a member of staff, visitor, volunteer or pupil has a mobile phone with the facility to take pictures, its use is subject to the policy on the use of cameras and the manipulation and storage of images, above.

- Staff should only use their personal mobile phones at a time when the education of pupils is not interrupted or affected.
- Staff may carry their phone on their person during school activities in case it is needed for two factor authentication to access their Google account.
- Staff may use their phone for personal matters at break and lunch times provided that (i) pupils are not present, (ii) they are not on duty and (iii) this does not prevent them from responding to a request for assistance

from another member of staff or other aspects of their professional duties.

- A phone must be taken by members of staff engaged in particular school activities where it is important to maintain communication with the school office. These include:
  - o Use of local offsite facilities – swimming pool, theatre, church,
  - o Lessons at more remote parts of the school campus – sports fields, music annexe, forest school
  - o Visits to the nursery
  - o Educational visits and away sports fixtures
  - o Breakfast Club and after school care
  - o When on duty at the beginning and end of the school day
  - o Situations where, by prior arrangement with the Headteacher, a single member of staff is directly responsible for a group of pupils and a second member of staff is “on call” nearby.
  - o The school switchboard is used for all times of the day until 6.15pm after which, the surgery phone (same number) must remain switched on and must be carried by one of the members of staff on duty at all times.

Parents and visitors to the school should refrain from using their mobile phones inappropriately whilst on the school site. Further information can be found in the parents’ handbook.

- By arrangement with the Headteacher, a member of staff’s personal mobile phone may be designated as the means of communication for specific activities (i.e. those listed above). In such situations, it is expected that this policy will be observed in respect of personal use. The cost of calls made on school business will be reimbursed, provided that they can be identified on an itemised bill or otherwise.
- The use of mobile phones by staff whilst on school duties must respect national legislation and common courtesies. For example, they must not be used whilst driving and should be switched to silent at events and venues where this is expected.
- The school assesses the risk to pupils through the improper use of mobile phones to be very low. Staff and volunteers must ensure that their use of mobile phones maintains this level of risk.

**All staff mobile phones are locked away in the EYFS settings.** Staff working with this age group are not permitted to use personal mobile phones when in the setting. Visitors to and parents of children in the EYFS setting are advised that no mobile phones or cameras can be used to take images.

## **14. USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AND PHYSICAL RESTRAINT; ACCEPTABLE PHYSICAL CONTACT**

### **1. The Legal Framework**

Physical Restraint should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Under the Children Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading “Physical Control”. Article 4 of the Education

Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law. It enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise. (Examples of possible situations are given in Section 6) This policy draws on 'Use of reasonable force; Advice for Heads, staff and governing bodies' published by the DfE in July 2013 [here](#) and page 42 of KCSIE 2023.
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## **2:1 Definition of restraint at Holmwood House**

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

## **2:2 General policy aims**

Staff at Holmwood House recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety/well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline. Our policy on restraint should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Child Protection policies.

## **2:3 Specific aims of the restraint policy**

- To protect every person in the school community from harm.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention that is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations.

## **3. Why use restraint?**

Physical restraint should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well being. Failure to physically restrain a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of



negligence. At the same time, staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

The school does not have a “no-contact” approach to pupil management, since this may leave staff unable to protect pupils. This section on reasonable force and physical restraint should, therefore, be read in connection with the section on physical contact, below. It is the intention of these policies to allow and support staff to make appropriate physical contact.

### **3.1 Alternative strategies**

There are some situations in which the need for physical restraint is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g. if a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. use of assertiveness skills such as:

- the broken record in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies
- use of a distractor, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
- withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high)
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the School’s policy on behaviour.

### **3.3 Use of physical restraint**

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment. Staff are authorised to use reasonable force only in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil’s path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective physical restraint should be a last resort.

KCSIE 2023 provides additional guidance that reasonable force may involve either *passive* physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil’s path, or *active* physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

When considering the use of reasonable force towards children with SEND or medical conditions, the risks should be carefully considered and reasonable

adjustments made in relation to individual needs. Individual behaviour plans, personal health or medical plans and other forms of proactive behaviour support should be taken into account to reduce the need for reasonable force.

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

#### DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

#### DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil.

### 3.4 Actions after an incident

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. **A member of the senior leadership team should be informed of any incident as soon as possible** and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed on the same day by the Headteacher or Deputy Head (see below). A copy of the form in Appendix 5 must be completed by the member of staff involved and any adult witnesses on the same day as the incident and passed to the person reviewing the incident. In incidents where a member of SLT or the Headteacher is involved the Safeguarding Governor or a member of Governance must be informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural EHC plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the Learning Support Coordinator. It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided. All incidents should be recorded immediately. All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full

record is available. The Headteacher (or, in his/her absence, a member of the leadership team) will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

#### **4 Risk Assessments**

If Holmwood House becomes aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, Holmwood House will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.

#### **5 Complaints**

A clear restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

#### **6 When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?**

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

#### **Acceptable Physical Contact**

It is inappropriate to rule out all forms of physical contact between adults and pupils in school. In many circumstances, particularly with younger pupils, physical contact is important in providing comfort, reassurance and trust. It is important, therefore, that acceptable parameters for physical contact are understood and followed. Staff should be careful that their actions do not lead to misinterpretation, making themselves vulnerable to accusations of inappropriate contact. In this context, this section should be read in conjunction with Section 10 (Safe Working Practice) of this policy and also the Bellevue employment manual.

### General Principles:

- Physical contact should always be a response to the needs of the child, not the adult and should last only as long as is necessary
- It should take place only with the child's clear consent
- Adults should be aware of any religious or cultural practices or beliefs which may influence whether physical contact is acceptable
- Aspects of the curriculum, such as coaching in sport, music, drama and dance, may be more effectively taught through strategies which involve physical contact. However, these should be undertaken in a public arena, such as a class situation, and not in one-to-one tuition.

### Specific Considerations

- The administration of first aid or medication may necessitate contact proximate to intimate areas of the body. In such circumstances, administration should be undertaken in a manner which respects the dignity of the patient by someone who is suitably qualified. Except with the youngest children, and thereafter, in accordance with age-appropriate expectations, administration should preferably be undertaken by someone of the same gender and a second adult should be present.

## **15. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM: THE 'PREVENT 2015' STRATEGY**

- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental values and includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The school is committed to supporting the 'Prevent' strategy in relation to radicalisation and extremism. It works to prevent children being drawn into supporting extremist ideas and terrorist ideology and to help them develop resilience to radicalisation. The Bellevue Safeguarding Governor is the governance committee's 'Prevent lead person' and the DSL is the nominated member of staff to be the 'Prevent lead person' in school.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet). However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying

children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include the DSL or deputy making a referral to the Channel programme

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Channel guidance can be found [here](#).

Further information on the Prevent duty can be found via the link in Appendix 2.

The school undertakes the following measures in relation to the 'Prevent Strategy':

- 'Prevent' is considered carefully as part of the school's safeguarding procedures
- All staff and volunteers undertake training in respect of 'Prevent'
- The DSL undertakes a higher level of 'Prevent' training in order to support staff, engage effectively with external agencies and follow reporting and information sharing protocols appropriately
- 'Prevent' is considered carefully in the appointment of new staff, volunteers and contractors and in the admitting of visitors and visiting speakers to the school
- 'Prevent' is a topic for governance, staff and SLT meetings
- There is a clear referral route through the DSL to 'Channel'
- The school strongly promotes fundamental British values in curricular and extracurricular activities and the promotion of the school's ethos and aims.
- The school will work as required with other agencies, including the LADO, LSCB, Children's Services and 'Channel' with regard to the 'Prevent' agenda
- Computer systems have appropriate levels of filtering to ensure, insofar as is possible, that terrorist and extremist material is suitably controlled
- The school provides internet safety training for pupils, parents and staff and pupils are strongly supported to enable them to use the internet safely
- PSHCE lessons, assemblies and other areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular programme include topics to help develop pupils' resilience to radicalisation.

Should advice and support about extremism be needed, any member of staff can contact the non-emergency police number 101 or, if urgent, 999. There is also a DfE dedicated telephone helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice for staff and members of the governance team: 020 7340 7264 and [counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk).

Concerns about pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalisation can be referred to ESCB using their Person Vulnerable to Radicalisation referral form and emailed to [Prevent@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Prevent@essex.pnn.police.uk).

## 16. VETTING VISITING SPEAKERS

The school is aware of the potential risk to children through exposure to views of visiting speakers whose presentations may include material of an extremist nature or which contradicts the school's commitment to provide pupils with a balance of opposing political views. Accordingly, the school undertakes a range of measures to vet the content of presentations by visiting speakers. The level of checking will be determined by an assessment of the likely level of risk and may include the following measures;

- There is a formal procedure for inviting speakers which involves approval by the Headteacher and a clear understanding of why the speaker has been chosen
- The visiting speaker will be asked to provide assurance that the content of the presentation does not include material of a radicalising or extremist nature and is not in any other way inappropriate for the pupils involved.
- Presentations, such as a Powerpoint, will be required in advance and will be checked by the member of staff responsible and discussed with the speaker
- A briefing by the organiser will take place to ensure that visiting speakers understand they must abide by the school's equality commitments; that there must be no statements which might cause offence to others, or otherwise undermine tolerance of other faiths or beliefs; and there must be no extremist material
- An understanding will be established that such talks and presentations will not be used to raise funds, without the prior written permission of the headteacher
- Visiting speakers should understand that their presentation will be brought to an early end, if the content proves unsuitable
- Visiting speakers must arrive at reception in good time to book in, and must bring suitable identification. Although viewing DBS certificates may be appropriate, most visiting speakers will not be in 'regulated activity' and so will not necessarily have a DBS certificate to present
- Visiting speakers will always be accompanied. A member of staff will attend presentations to pupils and will be prepared to intervene, should the content stray from agreed expectations
- An appropriate level of checks, including an identity check, will be undertaken on visiting speakers, particularly any not previously known to the school. Most speakers will be well known to the school (parents, local professionals, religious leaders) and the school will be familiar with their standing and reputation. Where a speaker represents an organisation, for example, the fire service or a charity, identity checks will include verification of the speaker's connection with the organisation.
- The school's vetting procedures may include an internet search to check for links with inappropriate organisations or the expression of extremist views which would indicate that it would be inappropriate to address pupils at the school.

- All information about the visiting speaker and the booking process should be recorded on a 'Visitor's Form'

After the presentation, an evaluation form should be completed which will include feedback from staff, note any contentious subject areas or comments, and state whether the speaker could be booked again in the future. Once a person has visited a school, future checks should be proportionate.

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

## **BOARDERS**

The school is essentially a day school with a significant and important boarding ('Overnight Stay') provision catering for weekly and flexi-time boarders in NC year groups 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (aged 8-13). Boarders have their own individual responsibilities associated with community living but they are never put in a position of responsibility for other boarders.

All boarding staff must be fully conversant with the school's Missing Child Policy which details methods of searching for and, if necessary, reporting any boarder missing from school.

Any member of the boarding staff is able to report concerns or allegations to Ofsted:

Telephone: 0300 123 4666

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Write: Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

Any member of staff will be given immunity from 'whistleblowing' in good faith.

## **TRANSPARENCY**

Holmwood House prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of Safeguarding are on our website, and we hope that parents and guardians will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with the school. We will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will always follow up any concerns thoroughly. Open communications are essential. Any deficiencies or weaknesses highlighted in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.

## **17. REVIEWING THIS POLICY**

When reviewing this policy the school will draw on the expertise of staff in shaping the safeguarding arrangements and policies, to ensure that the school considers at all times what is in the best interests of the child.

Date created	July 2016
Date Reviewed (Bellevue)	1 July 2021
Date Reviewed (Holmwood)	7 August 2023 for implementation from 1/9/23
Amendments made	



## Holmwood House Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy: Appendices

### Appendix 1 Helpful Information

This section is designed to provide information that facilitates understanding of key terminology and indicators:

**WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?** Defined in the Government guidance KCSIE (September 2023) Page 10, Paras 26 - 30.

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

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

There are four types of child abuse.

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

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

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

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

**Neglect:** 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 care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying is not defined as a form of abuse in WTSC but there is clear evidence that it is abusive and will include at least one, if not two, three or all four, of the defined categories of abuse.

The following provides useful guidance on specific further categories of abuse;

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Updated guidance includes the following definition:

- CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non- contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.
- CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.
- CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.
- Further information about CSE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex B of KCSIE 2023
- Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- -have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- -suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.
- Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

### **Child Criminal Exploitation**

- Some specific forms of CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation) can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.
- Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.
- It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Staff have been made aware of the updated guidance and recognise that no school, community or social group is immune to the risk of child sexual exploitation, including online, and it can affect both boys and girls. Children can be perpetrators as well as victims.

Appendix 2 provides links to relevant documentation relating to child sexual exploitation.

### **Child-on-child Abuse**

**All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have **any** concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Sexual violence and harassment can occur between two children

of any age and sex. Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

It is essential that **all** staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- 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 nudes and semi nudes images and or videos also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

**All** staff should be clear as to the school’s or college’s policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

### **Serious Violence and County Lines**

The school ensures that all staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of

self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts of new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity; drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person, male or female, under the age of 18
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual
- can involve force and/or enticement methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

For further information about sexual harassment see Annex B.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some more specific indicators for county lines include children who:

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

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

The school ensures that staff are aware of the associated risks of serious violence and county lines and understand the measures in place to manage these. Links to advice for schools on preventing youth violence and gang involvement and on county lines are to be found in Appendix 2.

This [one page process map](#) sets out arrangements for CSE in Essex.

### **Domestic abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial and
- emotional.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Links to documents providing advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped are available in Appendix 2.

### **FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)**

FGM is a crime committed usually within the scope of honour-based abuse. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 and, therefore, girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk. FGM is illegal in the UK. On the 31 October 2015, it became mandatory for teachers to personally report known cases of FGM to the police. Please refer to section 5, above for information on this mandatory duty and to Appendix 2 for relevant contact information.

For cases where it is believed that a girl may be vulnerable to FGM or there is a concern that she may be about to be genitally mutilated the staff will inform the DSL who will report it as with any other child protection concern.

### **Honour-Based Abuse (HBV)**

Honour-based abuse is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. It is often linked to family or community members who believe someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with their unwritten rule of conduct. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV. Honour based violence might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion
- want to get out of an arranged marriage
- want to get out of a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture
- convert to a different faith from the family

Women and girls are the most common victims of honour-based violence. However, it can also affect men and boys. Crimes of 'honour' do not always include violence. Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' might include:

- domestic abuse
- threats of violence
- sexual or psychological abuse
- forced marriage
- being held against your will or taken somewhere you don't want to go
- assault

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the DSL or deputy. As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. However, if it is clear that a crime has been committed or the pupil is at immediate risk, the police will be contacted in the first place. It is important, if honour-based violence is known or suspected, that communities and family members are NOT spoken to prior to referral to the police or social care as this could increase risk to the child.

### **Children Missing From Education**

The school views absence as an issue related to both safeguarding and educational outcomes. Measures have been taken to adopt the additional admissions and attendance requirements which came into force on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016 with a view to minimising the occurrence of children missing from education. Relevant staff have received training from the school's safeguarding governor in the implications and implementation of these measures. The school liaises with and reports to the Local Authority, as required, on these matters and may take steps that could result in legal action

for attendance, or a referral to children's social care, or both. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Education Access Team, Social Care or Police). In accordance with the requirements of KCSIE 2023, the school holds, so far as is reasonably possible, more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

Patterns of children missing education, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures. It is essential that they are assiduous in their prompt completion of attendance registers, liaise closely with the school office to resolve any unexplained absences, and report any concerns about absence to the DSL. A relatively short length of time a child is missing does not reduce risk of harm to that child, and all absence or non-attendance is considered with other known factors or concerns. On a day-to-day basis administrative staff monitor registers for patterns of absence and the DSL/a member of SLT undertakes a regular review of attendance records to analyse for patterns and trends. Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).

### **The DSLs and staff consider the following, as appropriate:**

Children missing, or being absent from, lessons:

- Are there patterns in the lessons that are being missed?
- Is this more than avoidance of a subject or a teacher?
- Does the child remain on the school site?
- Is the child being sexually exploited during this time?
- Is the child late because of a caring responsibility?
- Has he or she been directly or indirectly affected by substance misuse?
- Are other pupils routinely missing the same lessons, and does this raise other risks or concerns?
- Is the lesson being missed one that would cause bruising or injuries to become visible?
- can be warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse,
- sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation

Children missing single days:

- Is there a pattern in the day missed?
- Is it before or after the weekend suggesting the child is away from the area?



- Are there specific lessons or members of staff on these days?
- Is the parent informing the school of the absence on the day?
- Are missing days reported back to parents to confirm their awareness?
- Is the child being sexually exploited during this day?
- Do the parents appear to be aware?
- Are the pupil's peers making comments or suggestions as to the whereabouts of the pupil?

Children with continuous days of absence:

- Has the school been able to make contact with the parent?
- Is medical evidence being provided?
- Are siblings attending school (either our or local schools)?
- Did we have any concerns about radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage, honour based violence, sexual exploitation?
- Have we had any concerns about physical or sexual abuse?

### **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

Home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. Schools must inform their LA of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll, except if the name is deleted after they have completed the final year at the school. Where a parent/carers has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we recommend that LAs, schools, and other key professionals work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

### **Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents**

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

The school, through a number of avenues, provides practical advice to pupils on how to keep themselves safe.

### **Forced Marriage**

In the case of children: 'a forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses cannot consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.' In developing countries 11% of girls are married before the age of 15. One in 3 victims of forced marriage in the U.K. are under 18. It is important that all members of staff recognise the presenting symptoms, how to respond if there

are concerns and where to turn for advice. Advice and help can be obtained nationally through the Forced Marriage Unit and locally through the local police safeguarding team or children's social care. The school's policies and practices reflect the fact that, while all members of staff have important responsibilities with regard to pupils who may be at risk of forced marriage, they should not undertake roles in this regard that are most appropriately discharged by other children's services professionals, such as police officers or social workers.

Characteristics that may indicate forced marriage:

While individual cases of forced marriage, and attempted forced marriage, are often very particular, they are likely to share a number of common and important characteristics, including:

- an extended absence from school/college, including truancy;
- a dip in performance or sudden signs of low motivation;
- excessive parental restriction and control of movements;
- a history of siblings leaving education to marry early;
- poor performance, parental control of income and pupils being allowed only limited career choices;
- evidence of self-harm, treatment for depression, attempted suicide, social isolation, eating disorders or substance abuse; and/or
- evidence of family disputes/conflict, domestic violence/abuse or running away from home.

On their own, these characteristics may not indicate forced marriage. However, it is important to be satisfied that, where these behaviours occur, they are not linked to forced marriage. It is also important to avoid making assumptions about an individual pupil's circumstances or act on the basis of stereotyping. For example, an extended holiday may be taken for entirely legitimate reasons and may not necessarily represent a pretext for forced marriage.

## Cybercrime

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

Cyber-dependent crimes include unauthorised access to computers ("hacking"), denial of service (DoS) attacks ("booting"), and making, supplying or obtaining malicious software ("malware") with the intent to commit further offences.

If there are concerns about a child the DSL should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme aiming to intervene where a young person is at risk of being drawn into cyber-dependent offences. More information can be found at:

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyberchoices>

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

## Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including:

sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal or organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern

Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims. A copy of which can be found [here](#)

### **Definition of harm & significant harm - adoption & children act 2002 (section 10)**

"Ill treatment or the impairment of health or development (impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another)."

'*Development*' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

'*Health*' means physical or mental health.

'*Ill treatment*' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical.

NB: The Adoption & Children Act 2002 s120 amended the definition of harm to include those instances where a child may witness domestic violence.

### **Recognition of significant harm.**

Significant harm includes an allegation of a sexual nature or parents whose behaviour may present risk because of:

- Domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and mental health problems
- Any physical injury caused by assault or neglect which requires medical attention
- Repeated incidents of physical harm
- Any contact with a person assessed as presenting a risk to children
- Children who live in low emotional warmth, high criticism environments
- Children who suffer from persistent neglect
- Children who may be involved in prostitution
- Other circumstances where professional judgement and/or evidence suggest a child's health, development or welfare may be significantly harmed.
- 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

### **Harm Test**

What is the harm test? There are occasions where a person may not have engaged in relevant conduct but there are still serious concerns which satisfy the harm test. To satisfy the harm test there needs to be credible evidence of a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults such as statements made by an individual regarding conduct/behaviour, etc. For a case to be considered as a risk of harm, relevant conduct would not have occurred but there must be tangible evidence rather than a "feeling" that a person represents a risk to children and /or vulnerable adults. For example, a teacher who confides in their

head teacher that they are sexually attracted to children (but who had not engaged in 'relevant conduct') would satisfy the harm test.

### **Indicators of abuse**

#### **Physical:**

- Unexplained injuries, burns, bruises
- Finger marks
- Fear of undressing or medical help
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Fear of returning home or parents being contacted
- Unexplained absence from school.

#### **Neglect:**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness and non attendance
- Poor social relationships
- Constant tiredness
- Independent and street wise
- No parental support for education
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging.
- A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect.

#### **Emotional Abuse:**

- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses
- Self harm
- Reluctance to accept praise
- Low self esteem
- Lack of home support
- Depressed and withdrawn
- Social isolation – not joining in, and few friends.

#### **Sexual Abuse:**

- Bruises
- Scratches
- Bite marks on the body
- Persistent infections in the anal or genital area
- Any sexual awareness inappropriate to child's age – shown in drawings, play, vocabulary
- Frequent masturbation
- Changes in behaviour
- Refusal to stay with certain people
- Self-harm
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Pregnancy.

### **Recognition of abuse**

Be open to possibilities. Be aware – if you don't believe it is possible you will never see it. Don't jump to conclusions and look for credible non-abusive explanations, but recognise you may need to seek advice to evaluate the facts. Don't let your preconceptions of the family skew your judgement.

### **The symptoms of stress and distress**

An abused child will usually show signs of stress and distress. Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Many of these may, of course, have nothing to do with abuse, but are worth consideration in trying to understand the child's behaviour:

- A drop in school performance
- Aggressive or hostile behaviour
- Difficulties in relationships with peers
- Excessively affectionate or sexual behaviour towards adults or other children
- Regression to more immature forms of behaviour
- Self-harming or suicidal behaviour
- No reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injuries, or a pattern of injuries
- Disturbed sleep

In addition to the information provided in Section 15 on Radicalisation and Extremism and in this section on Abuse, staff can refer to Annex B of KCSIE 2023 for information on further specific areas of concern about vulnerability, including,

- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Child criminal exploitation
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the information provided within Part 1, including Annex B, of KCSIE 2023 and if they have any concerns report them to the DSL.

## Appendix 2 – Useful links and contact details

### School Contacts:

School - 01206 574305  
Nursery - 01206 273827

Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Francesca Bradbury fcb@holmwood.house
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (School):	Bethan Ashton bma@holmwood.house Edmund Cook ecc@holmwood.house
Designated Safeguarding Lead (Nursery):	Karen Travers karen.travers@holmwood.house
Bellevue Safeguarding Governor:	Gregg Davies

Children & Families Hub (Monday –Friday 9am-5pm): **0345 603 7627**

Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours): **0345 606 1212**

LADO: **0333 013 9797**

### Independent Schools Inspectorate

Email: info@isi.net  
Telephone: 020 7600 0100  
Fax: 020 7776 8849  
Address: CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

### Ofsted

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
Telephone: 0300 123 4234  
Address: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

### Disclosure and Barring Service

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>  
Email: dbdispatch@db.s.gsi.gov.uk  
Address: DBS, PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA  
Telephone: 01325 953795

### Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) (KCSIE)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181955/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf)

### Part 1 only is available separately here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181962/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2023\\_-\\_part\\_1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181962/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_part_1.pdf)

[one.pdfhttps://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181962/Keeping children safe in education 2023 - part one.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181962/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_part_one.pdf)

### **Working together to safeguard children December 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working together to safeguard children 2023 - statutory guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Version of this guidance suitable for young people

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/working-together-to-safeguard-children/>

Version of this guidance suitable for younger children

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/guide-to-keeping-children-safe/>

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

### **Contact details for advice and support about extremism**

LA Prevent lead, in Prevent priority areas

**Jo Barclay**

Local police force

101 (the non-emergency police number)

DfE dedicated telephone helpline and mailbox for non-emergency advice for staff and governors :

020 7340 7264 and

[counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk).

Essex Police Prevent Team can be contacted via their website

### **Revised Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

### **Contact details for mandatory reporting of FGM to the police:**

Call 101

NSPCC FGM Helpline: **0800 028 3550**

### **Missing Children**

Useful contacts:

**Shane Thomson, ECC Missing Co-ordinator: [shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk](mailto:shane.thomson@essex.gov.uk)**

**Lucy Stovell, ECC Missing Chats: [lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.stovell@essex.gov.uk)**

### **DfE Guidance on Mental Health**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/755135/Mental\\_health\\_and\\_behaviour\\_in\\_schools\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/414908/Final EHWP draft 20 03 15.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final_EHWP_draft_20_03_15.pdf)

## **DfE guidance on Behaviour in schools**

Behaviour in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff September 2022

## **DfE Guidance on Information Sharing**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

## **Further information on contextual safeguarding**

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

## **NSPCC Inform website**

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform>

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline**

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

Telephone: 0800 028 0285

Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people**

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100202180143/http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00311/>

## **Office of the Children's Commissioner for England (OCC)**

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/>

Email: [advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk) or  
[info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners;

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners)

Child sexual exploitation: annexes;

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/591905/CSE\\_Guidance\\_Annexes\\_13.02.2017.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591905/CSE_Guidance_Annexes_13.02.2017.pdf)

## **Child-on-Child Abuse**

- **DfE Guidance:**

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

- **Advice from the UK Council for child internet safety:**

Sexting: How to respond to an incident:

[Sexting: how to respond to an incident](#)

- **Sexting in schools and colleges:**

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)



- **NSPCC Guidance on Harmful Sexual Behaviour:**  
Understanding Sexual Behaviour in Children

### **Home Office guidance on preventing youth violence and gang involvement**

Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges

### **Home Office guidance on Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines**

Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance

### **Documents providing help in identifying and helping children who are affected by domestic abuse:**

#### **NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects**

How to Protect Children From Domestic Abuse

Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children  
<http://www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/support-for-women/what-about-my-children/>

Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.

<http://www.safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse>

### **Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the GDPR.**

Data Protection: toolkit for schools

#### **Online safety**

DfE advice for schools Teaching online safety in schools

UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)27 guidance: Education for a Connected World

National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: Thinkuknow

Public Health England Rise Above

Resources that could support schools and colleges include:

- Be Internet Legends developed by Parent Zone and Google is a free internet safety curriculum with PSHE accredited lesson plans and teaching resources for Key Stage 2 pupils
- Disrespectnobody is Home Office advice and includes resources on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography
- Education for a connected world framework from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to

RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the

curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central

to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.

- PSHE association provides guidance to schools on developing their PSHE curriculum

- Teaching online safety in school is departmental guidance outlining how schools

can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of

existing curriculum requirements

- Thinkuknow is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age specific resources

- UK Safer Internet Centre developed guidance and resources that can help with the teaching of the online safety component of the Computing Curriculum.

## **Appendix 3 - Sample Correspondence to Parents and Children Regarding Internet Use**

### ***Sample Correspondence to Parents***

INTERNET USE (A Google Form is used to collect this information/consent).

As part of your child's curriculum and the development of their ICT skills, Holmwood House provides supervised access to the internet. We believe that the effective use of the internet and email is not only worthwhile but is an essential skill for children as they grow up in the modern world.

Although there are concerns about pupils having access to undesirable material, we have taken positive steps to reduce this risk in school. Our school operates a filtering system that restricts access to inappropriate materials and pupils are generally supervised when using computers.

Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure that suitable restrictions are placed on the ability of children to access inappropriate materials, the school cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the internet. The school will not be liable for any damages arising from your child's use of the internet facilities.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of internet use, please do not hesitate to contact Abigail Wills, Admission Registrar. Please complete the online consent form so that your child may use the internet and email at school.

### **Parent's Consent for Internet Access**

I have read and understood the school rules for responsible internet use and give permission for my son/daughter to access the internet. I understand the school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure pupils cannot access inappropriate materials. I understand that the school cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the internet. I agree that the school is not liable for any damages arising from use of the internet facilities.

### ***Correspondence to Pupils***


#### **Holmwood House Responsible Computer Use**

A comprehensive ICT Acceptable Use Policy forms part of the pupils' Prep Diaries. Pupils are guided through this policy in ICT lessons and are required to sign it during the first weeks of the school year.

## Appendix 4 – Sample Photographic Consent Forms

A Google Form is used to collect this information/consent.

## Appendix 5

		<h3>RECORD OF RESTRAINT</h3>	
<b>This form, once completed, should be handed to FCB.</b>			
Date of Incident:		Time of Incident:	
Pupil Name:		DoB:	
Member(s) of staff involved:			
Adult witnesses to restraint:		Pupil witnesses to restraint:	
Outline of event leading to restraint:			
Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):			
Outcome of incident:			
Description of any injury sustained and any subsequent treatment:			
Signatures of staff completing report:			
<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY FCB/AJM</b>			
Date/time parent/carer informed of incident:			
By whom informed:			
Outline of parent/carer response:			
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action:			

## Appendix 6

### ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

#### Overview

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the first point of contact for any member of the school or nursery staff who has a concern about the safety and well being of a child.

They have responsibility to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the school, to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies and to monitor the effectiveness of policies and procedures in practice.

The DSL does not need to be a member of the teaching staff but should be a recognised member of the Senior Leadership Team with the required status and authority to carry out the requirements of the role. At the nursery, the DSL is a suitably qualified member of staff with the required training and understanding of the safeguarding requirements of the setting and is a member of the management team.

Because of the size and requirements of the settings, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will be appointed as appropriate. The deputy is the first point of contact in the absence of the DSL to avoid any unnecessary delays in responding to a child's needs.

The DSL and Deputy are required to undertake child protection training every two years and should supplement this training by attending relevant workshops provided by Essex Safeguarding Children Board and reading e-bulletins received from ESCB. In addition, the DSL and DDSL undertake Prevent training.

#### Requirements

- To be available during school/nursery hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- To have the skills and ability to identify signs of abuse.
- To know how to refer concerns to the appropriate investigating agencies. Referrals to Essex Children's Social Care (Children and Families Operations Hub) should be made in accordance with current SET procedures working with the local authority and other agencies as required. Referrals do not require parental consent.
- To support staff who make referrals to Essex Children's Social Care (Children and Families Operations Hub).
- To refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- To support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.

- To refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, together with the Headmaster.
- To refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required, together with the Headmaster.
- To act as a point of contact with safeguarding partners.
- To liaise with the Headmaster to inform him of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- As required, to liaise with the 'case manager' and the LADO for child protection concerns for all cases which concern a staff member.
- To liaise with relevant agencies and staff when deciding whether to make a referral.
- To liaise with the senior mental health lead and team, where available, where concerns are linked to mental health.
- To understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- To promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may face challenging circumstances.
- To work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
  - ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
  - supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.
- To understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
- Maintain up to date, detailed and accurate written records of child protection concerns (including action and outcome) and ensure they are kept securely.

- Offer support, advice and give a level of expertise to all members of the staff team.
- Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the Safeguarding Policy.
- To ensure the policy is reviewed annually and procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, working alongside governors.
- To ensure the policy is available publicly via the school website and parents know referrals may be made, and the role of the school in this.
- To help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.
- To undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.
- To provide child protection training as part of the induction for all new staff in the school/nursery.
- To ensure that all staff have induction training covering child protection and are enabled to recognise and report any concerns immediately.
- To encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school puts in place to protect them.
- To understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.
- Ensure that the Headmaster is updated on a regular basis about all issues and child protection investigations.
- Lead the team who review and monitor any causes of concern relating to pupils which are raised in school.
- Ensure all staff have read Part One of the most recent version of KCSIE (including Annex B) and undertaken any e-learning modules as required by the school.
- To coordinate the implementation of the Prevent duty.
- To undertake additional training in relation to FGM to ensure that the DSL can be approached to discuss and direct difficult cases.
- To provide suitable training for all staff in relation to FGM.
- To ensure that staff are supported during the referral processes, and support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

- To ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference called for children on the school roll or previously known to them.
- To ensure any child subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional wellbeing, academic progress, welfare and presentation.
- To ensure the school is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at Child Protection or Child in Need meetings where it is part of the core group.
- To attend the fortnightly meeting of the school's Safeguarding Team.
- To link with ESCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Take responsibility, when a child leaves the school, for ensuring that the child protection file is transferred securely to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term and obtaining confirmation of receipt. Such a transfer of information should be separate from the main pupil file. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. As a recipient of a child protection file from a previous school, the DSL must ensure that key staff, including the SENCO, are made aware as required.
- To understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- To understand the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place in school and liaise with the IT Technician and ICT coordinator on these.

### **Considerations**

The school understands that the DSLs require sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their responsibilities effectively and the need for regular reviews of their own practice and opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have about welfare and safeguarding matters. At the school, the Headteacher will provide opportunities for the DSL to reflect upon cases and to be debriefed at regular intervals and the nursery manager will ensure the nursery DSL is similarly supported.



