Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Policy document provenance

Approver:	Trust board
Date of approval:	September 2025
Reviewers:	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in each academy
Policy owners:	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in each academy
Policy Author(s):	Deputy Headteacher and DSL at Beacon Academy
Date of next review:	September 2026

Version Control:	V1.0	September 2025
	V1.1	(*Insert date of any in year amendment*)
Summary of key changes made since last review:	Updated to bring in line with changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE September 2025)	
	New policy format introduced	

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. Should no substantive changes be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

Related policies and documents:	MARK Education Trust Whistleblowing policy
	MARK Education Trust Online Safety policy
	MARK Education Trust Attendance policy
	MARK Education Trust Complaints policy
	MARK Education Trust Behaviour policy
	MARK Education Trust Equalities policy
	MARK Education Trust offsite visits policy
	MARK Education Trust SEND policy
	MARK Education Trust Acceptable Use policy
	MARK Education Trust Health & Safety policy
	MARK Education Trust Staff Code of Conduct
	MARK Education Trust Data Protection policy
Each academy's own policy on:	MARK Education Trust Recruitment & selection policy
	Anti bullying policy
	Supporting students with health needs policy

Contents   **Page**

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Guiding Principles

MARK Education Trust's (the trust) believes that all students should feel safe and happy, enabling them to thrive and succeed. One of the guiding values is for everyone to be motivated to create exceptional, caring and safe educational establishments.

In practice this means that our students' welfare is our paramount concern. The trust board will:

- Ensure that our schools safeguard and promote the welfare of students

- Work together with other agencies to ensure that our schools have robust arrangements to identify, assess and support those students who are experiencing or are likely to experience harm

- Recognise that our schools are communities and all those directly connected - staff, volunteers, trustees, Local Governing Committee (LGC) members, parents, families and students - have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure

This policy and procedure outline how the trust and its schools protect all children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

1   Introduction

1.1.   Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

1.2.   Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge

- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online

- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

- Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes

1.3.   Child protection is the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

1.4.   The trust board will ensure that our schools will safeguard and promote the welfare of students and work together with other agencies to ensure that our schools have robust arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm.

1.5.   The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. The trust's Online Safety policy covers this area of work. This policy includes details of how internet use at school is filtered and monitored and how we teach children to stay safe online whether they are at school or at home. Each of our schools is a community and all those directly connected, staff members, trustees, LGC members, parents, families and students, have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure.

1.6.   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 will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

1.7.   Within this document the term 'staff' should be broadly read as any adult working within the school, whether directly employed, providing a contracted service, a one-off service such as a supply teacher or a volunteer.

2   Ethos

2.1.   The trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every student both inside and outside the school premises and recognises that all staff, including permanent and temporary staff, volunteers and trustees, have a responsibility to take a full and active role in protecting our students from harm.

2.2.   We believe that our trust should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, emotional and moral development of the individual child.

2.3.   We recognise the importance of providing an environment within each of our schools that will help children feel safe and respected. We recognise the importance of enabling children to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to.

2.4.   Each school will work with parents to build an understanding of its responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

3   Scope

3.1.   In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years.

3.2.   This policy applies to all members of staff in the trust, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, trustees, LGC members, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

4   Legal framework

4.1.   Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies of maintained academies and further education institutions (including sixth-form colleges) to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of each school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at each school. Section 157 of the same Act places a similar duty on non-maintained and independent educational establishments, including free academies and academies.

4.2.   Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, all maintained academies, further education colleges and independent Academies, including free academies and academies, are required to cooperate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.

4.3.   Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership can require an academy or college to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.

4.4.   This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

* DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'

* DfE (2023 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'

* Home Office (2023) 'Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales

* DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'

* DfE (2025) 'Academy trust handbook 2025'

* HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'

- HM Government (2025) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation'

- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'

- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

- ESCC Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

- ESCC Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018

- DfE Working together to improve school attendance 2024

- DfE Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges 2024

5   Roles and responsibilities

5.1.   The DSL and DDSL's in each school are listed in appendix D. Their responsibilities are described in Appendix A.

5.2.   A DSL will be on each school's leadership team, and their role of DSL will be explicit in their job description. This person will have the appropriate authority and be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children. The DSL's lead responsibility will not be delegated.

5.3.   Each school has Designated Teachers (listed on page 5) who are responsible for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after. They will work with the Virtual Academy to discuss how available funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.

5.4.   The trust board has a nominated trustee responsible for safeguarding. They will champion good practice, provide critical challenge, liaise with the Executive Headteacher and provide information and reports to the board of trustees.

5.5.   The case manager for dealing with allegations of abuse made against trust staff members is the Executive Headteacher. The case manager for dealing with allegations against the Executive Headteacher is the chair of trustees. The procedure for managing allegations is detailed in Appendix B.

5.6.   The Executive Headteacher will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the trust board are fully implemented and sufficient resources and time is allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.

5.7.   The trust board is collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the trust and its school's ethos and reflected in day-to-day practice.

5.8.   All staff members, trustees, LGC members, volunteers and external providers know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to students who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child. Staff should also be aware that a student may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

5.9.   All staff members are annually required to read part one and annex B of KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) and sign to confirm this.

5.10.   All staff undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring),

the four categories of risk as identified in KCSIE: Content, Contact, Conduct, Commerce during their induction – this will be regularly updated.

6 Supporting children

6.1. Each school will support its students by:

- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning;

- ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly in and out of school;

- filtering and monitoring internet use, to safeguard from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, but not restrict and negatively impact on learning

- ensuring that safeguarding is included in the curriculum to help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to;

- providing students with a number of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties;

- supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence;

- encouraging development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying;

- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children;

- monitoring children who have been identified as having welfare or safeguarding concerns and providing appropriate support.

- ensuring that all staff are aware of the early help process, and understand their role in it, including acting as the lead professional where appropriate.

- ensuring that all staff understand the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities for certain groups of children or characteristics, and how to address them.

6.2. Additional vulnerabilities and characteristics can include:

- Looked after children

- Previously looked after children

- Children who are disabled or have certain health conditions and have specific additional needs

- Children who have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)

- Children who have a mental health need

- Children who are young carers

- Children showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines

- Children frequently going missing from education, home or care Children who have experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and are in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit

- Children at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation

- Children in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse

- Children with a parent or carer in custody, or who are affected by parental offending

- Children at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage

- Children misusing drugs or alcohol themselves

- Children who have returned home to their family from care

- Children showing early signs of abuse and, or neglect

- Children at risk of being radicalised or exploited

- Privately fostered children

- Children or a young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender or who are perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (whether they are or not)

6.3. Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;

- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;

- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and

- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges each school will ensure that these children receive additional monitoring and pastoral support.

6.4. Children who have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs may be vulnerable to further harm due to experiences of adversity and trauma, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and positive mental health. Our schools will identify the additional needs of these children and provide extra monitoring and pastoral support to mitigate these additional barriers.

6.5. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where it is known that children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. Our schools will identify the additional needs of these children and provide extra monitoring and pastoral support to mitigate these additional barriers. Where necessary, referrals will be made to mental health professionals for further support.

6.6. LGBTQ+ pupils. The fact that a pupil may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.

Staff will also be aware that the risks to these pupils can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these pupils and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.

6.7. Each school in the trust is a part of Sussex Police Operation Encompass (see Appendix B for further details) and we will support individual children as necessary when we receive a notification of an incident of domestic violence or abuse.

6.8.   Each school takes a trauma informed approach to supporting children, considering their lived experience, and factoring this into how we can best support them with their welfare and engage them with their learning.

7   Child protection and safeguarding procedure

Each school:

7.1.   Has developed a structured procedure in line with Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2025, which will be followed by all members of the trust community in cases where there are welfare or safeguarding concerns.

7.2.   In line with procedures, the Children's Social Care Single Point of Advice (SPoA) will be notified as soon as there is a significant concern, or where a level 3 referral is required.

7.3.   Will ensure that students are made aware that information regarding DSLs and who to report a concern to can be found located around the school site, and the student areas such as Support Offices, canteens, quiet rooms etc. Each school consults and listens to students via the Student Council. Students are made aware of this via assemblies, tutor time and our PSHE programme.

7.4.   Will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and act in the best interests of children by publishing the policy and procedures on each school website and by referring to them in the introductory school materials.

8   The management of safeguarding

8.1.   Each school has structures and systems in place, such as scheduled meetings and shared databases, to ensure that the DSL/DDSL has oversight of areas of school organisation which may not fall within their remit, but may impact upon effective safeguarding such as behaviour, attendance, medical needs/first aid, SEND and bullying. Information from all of these areas will be factored into safeguarding decision making for individual children.

8.2.   Each school will ensure that the DSL/DDSL is kept informed of any incident of physical intervention with a child and will be aware of behaviour plans for specific children.

8.3.   Each school will ensure that the DSL/DDSL is kept informed of attendance patterns, and where there are concerns for individual children the response to this will be considered within the context of safeguarding.

8.4.   Each school will ensure that the DSL/DDSL is kept informed of arrangements for first aid and children with medical conditions and is alerted where a concern arises, such as an error with the administering of medicines or intervention, or repeated medical appointments being missed, or guidance or treatments not being followed by the parents or the child.

8.5.   Each school has systems in place to ensure that hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic, transphobic gender or disability-based bullying, are reported, recorded and considered under safeguarding arrangements by the DSL/DDSL.

8.6.   In each school the DSL/DDSL links with curriculum leads, such as PSHE and ICT, to ensure that the curriculum supports the wellbeing and resilience of students and teaches them about risk assessment and safeguarding issues, such as healthy relationships and online safety.

9.   Children and online safety outside of school

9.1.   It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police. Online

teaching does not currently take place – this will be reviewed and where and when applicable the following will be considered:

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.

- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms and the background should be blurred.

- The class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.

- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.

- Staff must only use platforms provided by the school to communicate with students.

- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

10. Reporting concerns and record keeping

10.1. All safeguarding and welfare concerns, discussions and decisions made will be recorded in writing and kept in line with the East Sussex East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidance Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns Guidance for Early Years Settings, Academy's and Colleges.

10.2. Hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic, gender or disability-based bullying, are reported, recorded and considered under safeguarding arrangements.

10.3. Attendance patterns are reviewed and where concerns are identified are responded to under safeguarding arrangements.

10.4. Each school will continue to support any student leaving the school about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including welfare and safeguarding concerns, is forwarded under confidential cover to the student's new school as a matter of priority, and within 5 working days. (ESCC best practice is that this should be actioned within five working days).

10.5. When a student is due to transfer to another school the DSL will consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new academy or college in advance of the student leaving. For example, information that would allow the new academy or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

10.6. When a new student joins one of the trust's schools, and there is a record of safeguarding or welfare concerns, we will ensure that this information is shared appropriately with the DSL, the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the Designated Teacher for LAC, as necessary.

11. Safer workforce and managing allegations against staff and volunteers

The trust will ensure:

11.1. All individuals working in any capacity at the trust will be subjected to safeguarding checks in line with the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025.*

11.2. that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide us with evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in the trust. We will also ensure that any agency worker presenting for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

11.3. That alternative provision providers provide evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working for their organisation.

11.4. That every job description and person specification will have a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder.

11.5. That at least one member of every interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.

11.6. We have a procedure in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025.

12. Staff induction, training and development

12.1. All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given an induction which includes the following:

- Issue and explain the safeguarding and child protection policy

- Issue and explain the behaviour policy

- Issue and explain the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct

- Issue and explain the policy/guidance which includes the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

- Explain the role of the DSL and share the identities of the DSL and all DDSLs

- Issue Part One and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025

- Child protection and safeguarding training (including online safety)

- All new members of staff are expected to read the above-mentioned documents and to sign an acknowledgement of this

12.2. The induction and ongoing training of staff will include the following key aspects:

- Staff understand the difference between a safeguarding concern and a child in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm.

- Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

- When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

- Staff understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign that they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.

- Staff understand that children who have a social worker may be educationally disadvantaged and face barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and positive mental health.

- Staff understand that mental health issues for children may be an indicator of harm or abuse, or where it is known that a child has suffered harm or abuse this may impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

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

- Staff know how best to respond to a child who makes a disclosure of abuse or harm.

- If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or deputy DSL.

- If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

- Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action.

12.3. The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.

Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from SPoA. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

12.4. The DSL and DDSL's will undergo updated safeguarding and child protection training every two years. In addition to this their knowledge and skills will be updated regularly, and at least annually, to keep up with developments relevant to the role.

12.5. All staff members of the trust will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (whole-school training) which is regularly updated. The DSL will provide briefings for staff on any changes to safeguarding and child protection legislation and procedures and relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews as required, but at least annually.

12.6. Staff members who miss whole school training will be required to undertake other relevant training to make up for it, e.g. by joining another academy's whole-academy training, or receiving 1:1 training from the DSL teams/HR. The DSL and HR will be responsible for arranging this.

12.7. Ensure that all trustees and LGC members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated annually. The nominated trustee for safeguarding and child protection will attend East Sussex governor training prior to or soon after appointment to the role; this training will be updated every three years.

12.8. Trustees should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

12.9. Each school will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding and child protection training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole-school training if it takes place during their period of work for the trust.

12.10. On the first occasion which staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors come to work at the trust, they will be provided with details of the safeguarding arrangements at the school, which will include identifying the DSL and the process for reporting welfare concerns. This will be in the form of a leaflet provided by Reception or statement via electronic device when signing in.

12.11. The trust will maintain accurate records of staff induction and training.

13   Confidentiality, consent and information sharing

13.1. The trust recognises that all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential.

13.2. The Executive Headteacher, Headteacher, DSL or DDSL will disclose any information about a student to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis, and in the best interests of the child.

13.3. All staff members are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

13.4. All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

13.5. All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

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

14   Inter-agency working

14.1.   Each school will be fully engaged, involved and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Once the school is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. The school will act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements.

14.2.   The trust will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care.

14.3.   The trust will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings and forums, including child protection conferences and core groups, to consider individual children.

14.4.   The trust will participate in safeguarding practice reviews (previously known as serious case reviews), other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits, embedding recommendations into practice and completing required actions within agreed timescales.

15   Contractors, service and activity providers, alternative provision providers and work placements providers

15.1.   The trust will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our trust safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. We require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns. The school will refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances

15.2.   The trust will seek written notification that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding check in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2025.* If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our trust premises may be refused.

For agency and third party supply staff, the school will have sight of the original DBS certificate, and this will be recorded on the SCR. In addition, written confirmation from the employment business supplying the member of staff will be recorded, to evidence that all the necessary safer recruitment checks have been conducted (i.e. all the same checks the school would perform on any individual working in the school or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery) and the date that confirmation was received.

Checks that have been conducted for volunteers will also be recorded on the SCR. If risk assessments are conducted to assess whether a volunteer should be subject to an enhanced DBS check, the risk assessment will be recorded.

Written confirmation that supply agencies have completed all relevant checks will also be included.

The school is free to record any other information it deems relevant.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the school.

15.3.   When the trust commissions services from other organisations, it will ensure that compliance with this policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.

15.4.   When a student is placed with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that student. The school will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

Those responsible for the commissioning of alternative provision will be aware that pupils in alternative provision will often have complex needs – they will be mindful of the additional risk of harm that these pupils may be vulnerable to.

15.5. Work experience - the trust will ensure that schools have the appropriate procedures in place to ensure that providers of work experience have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Where pupils are undertaking work experience at the trust or one of the schools within the trust, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the pupil is over the age of 16.

16   Whistleblowing and complaints

16.1.   The trust recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so.

16.2.   The trust will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding and child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the Headteacher, Executive Headteacher, the chair of trustees or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Should staff not feel able to raise concerns they can call the NSPCC "what you can do to report abuse" dedicated helpline on 0800 028 0285.

16.3.   The trust has a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice.

17   Site security

17.1.   The school sites are surrounded by a continuous perimeter fence/wall to reduce the risk of unauthorised access/egress.

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

17.3.   Each school will check the identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out in the office visitors' log and to display a visitor's badge whilst on the school sites. Any individual who is not known or identifiable by their lanyard will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

17.4.   Each school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, children or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.

18   Use of school premises for non-school activities

18.1.   Where the trust hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. The school will refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

18.2.   Where the trust provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The trust will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The trust will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

19   Quality assurance

19.1   The trust will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures. This will include periodic audits of welfare concerns and safeguarding files and records by the DSL.

19.2   The trust will ensure that audits are arranged of the trust's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership and using the audit tool provided by them for this purpose.

19.3   The trust's senior management and the board of trustees will ensure that action is taken to remedy without delay any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

20   Policy review

20.1   This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the trust's policy review cycle.

20.2   The DSL's in each academy will ensure that staff members are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures.

Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures

1 Definitions

1.1 **Abuse**, including neglect, is a form of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

1.2 **"Consent"** is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

1.3 The terms **"children"** and **"child"** refer to anyone under the age of 18.

1.4 **Child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and refers to activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

1.6 **Harm** is ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

1.7 **Safeguarding children** is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*: *A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children: December 2023*

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

1.8 The **"consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos"**, colloquially known as **"sexting"**, and collectively called **"youth-produced sexual imagery"** is defined as the creation of sexually explicit content by a person under the age of 18 that is shared with another person under the age of 18. This definition does not cover persons under the age of 18 sharing adult pornography or exchanging messages that do not contain sexual images.

"**Deep fakes**" and "**deep nudes**" refer to digitally manipulated and AI-generated nudes and semi-nudes.

"**Indecent imagery**" is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing

- A child touching themselves in a sexual way

- Any sexual activity involving a child

- Someone hurting a child sexually

- Sexual activity that involves animals

- Indecent images also include indecent **"pseudo-images,"** which are images that have been created or manipulated using computer software and/or AI.

2 Categories of abuse

2.1 **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- making a child feel worthless, unloved or inadequate

- only there to meet another's needs

- inappropriate age or developmental expectations

- overprotection and limitation of exploration, learning and social interaction

- seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. domestic abuse

- making the child feel worthless and unloved - high criticism and low warmth

- serious bullying (including cyberbullying)

- exploitation or corruption

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

2.2 **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical 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 misuse. Once a child is born, it may involve a parent 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

- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Depending on the age and capacity of the child, staff should be aware of possible self-neglect, where a child may not be following medical guidance or taking medication as prescribed. Where this is the case, this should be raised as a safeguarding concern.

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

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

2.4 **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Activities may involve physical contact, including penetration of any part of the body, or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at or in the production of sexual images,

including on the internet, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

2.5 Child sexual exploitation is also sexual abuse; it involves children and young people receiving something, for example accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It could take the form of grooming of children, e.g. to take part in sexual activities or to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

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

2.7 **Domestic abuse** is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person (including conduct directed at someone else, e.g. the person's child) where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. **'Abusive behaviour'** includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse. **'Personally connected'** includes people who:

- Are, have been, or have agreed to be married to each other

- Are, have been or have agreed to be in a civil partnership with each other

- Are, or have been in an intimate personal relationship with each other

- Each have, or had, a parental relationship towards the same child

- Are relatives

All staff will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

3   Specific safeguarding issues

3.1 All staff members need to be aware of specific safeguarding issues and be alert to any risks. Chapter 8 of the *Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures - https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/page/contents* has detailed information about specific issues such as child sexual exploitation, fabricated or induced illness, female genital mutilation, children who harm other children, private fostering, etc., and the local procedures to respond to risks.

3.1.2 All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

3.2   Children and the court system

3.2.1 Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year-olds and 12-17-year-olds. They explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Your child is a witness - booklet for parents, carers and helpers - GOV.UK

3.2.2 Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers. Making child arrangements if you divorce or separate: Making child arrangements - GOV.UK

3.2.3 Schools need to be mindful of the stress of these situations and signposting parents to external resources where necessary. Equally the impact upon staff of managing these situations also needs to be considered.

3.3   Children absent from education

3.3.1   All staff should be aware that children can be absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and 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.

3.3.2   Each school must inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 11 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

3.3.3   All staff should be aware of each school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

3.3.4   The named school will attempt to communicate with the family regularly during the period of absence, and if there is a significant safeguarding concern or lack of communication, the school or external agency (if directed by the school) will conduct a home visit or welfare check every 5 to 10 days during the period of absence, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

3.4   Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

For the purposes of this policy, **'child abduction'** is defined as the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim and strangers.

All staff will be alert to community safety incidents taking place in the vicinity of the school that may raise concerns regarding child abduction, e.g. people loitering nearby or unknown adults conversing with students.

Students will be provided with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe outdoors.

3.5   Child sexual exploitation

3.5.1   Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex;

- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;

- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;

- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;

- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;

- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);

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

- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

3.5.2   Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;

- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;

- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;

- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;

- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;

- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and

- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

3.6   Child criminal exploitation: county lines

3.6.1   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 as well contacting the school's local police contact (PCSO). 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 years;

- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;

- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;

- can involve force and/or enticement-based 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; and

- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.

3.6.2   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.

3.7   Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of indicators that may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendship or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

The Serious Violence Duty December 2022 gives guidance on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, to share data and information, and put plans in place to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Schools will be under a separate duty to cooperate with core duty holders when asked – each school will ensure arrangements are in place to do so.

3.8   Domestic abuse

3.8.1   The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

3.8.2   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

3.8.3   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.

3.9   Homelessness

3.9.1   Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

3.9.2   The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis. Homelessness Reduction Act: policy factsheets - GOV.UK

3.9.3   In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for

example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people, and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

3.10 So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA)

3.10.1 **Actions**

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach (see following section).

3.11 FGM

3.11.1 FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

3.12 FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

3.12.1 Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

3.12.2 Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

3.13 Forced marriage

3.13.1 Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Academies and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

3.13.2 Following legislation which came into force on 27 February 2023, the minimum age at which one can legally marry or enter into a civil partnership in England and Wales is 18. The distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage does not exist when it comes to the marriage of a child. It is

an offence to engage in any conduct for the purpose of causing a child to marry before their 18th birthday.

3.13.3   If a family must resort to violence or coercion to make someone marry, those involved are not giving consent. If a person lacks the capacity to consent, it cannot be given freely; therefore, these marriages are not valid under the Marriage Act 1949 and the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, where the marriage is void if either party did not consent to it.

3.13.4   Forced marriage is a form of abuse and must be treated as such – ignoring the needs of a victim is never an option. For schools to support and safeguard pupils within their communities, and be ready for possible mandatory reporting, it is important that all staff have a strong understanding of what is meant by forced marriage and how to raise and share concerns about it.

3.13.5   The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and Multi-agency guidelines, with pages 35-36 of which focus on the role of Academies and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk.

3.14   Modern Slavery

3.14.1   For the purposes of this policy, **'modern slavery'** encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE and other forms of exploitation.

3.14.2   All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a student may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will refer to the DSL or DDSL immediately with any concerns.

3.15   Further Information on Online Safety (use of ICT, the internet, mobile technology and social media)

3.15.1   The trust has an Online Safety policy which includes guidance for all students in relation to online safety and using the internet and social media. There are appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place of which staff are aware and know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff are encouraged to report their concerns if they believe that children are using the internet, mobile technology or social media inappropriately (e.g. sexting). In these instances, the DSL will review the circumstances and speak with parents and make appropriate referrals as necessary.

3.15.2   As part of the usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use.

The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

3.15.3   The school will ensure that appropriate filtering systems are in place on school devices and school networks to prevent children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with the school's Cyber-security Policy. The school will, however, ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause 'over blocking', which may lead to unreasonable restrictions, as to what pupils can be taught online. The school will also ensure that it meets the Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges published by the DfE.

3.15.4   Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems during their induction.

3.16   Preventing radicalisation

3.16.1   Children are susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of an Academies' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; cause 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.

3.16.2   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 designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the PREVENT programme.

3.17   The Prevent duty

3.17.1   All academies and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. There are PREVENT leads in all of our schools and they are noted in the contacts section of the policy.

3.17.2   The Prevent duty should be seen as part of academies' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 33-46 -76 which are specifically concerned with education.

3.18   Additional support

3.18.2   There is additional guidance: Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales that applies to colleges.

3.18.3   Educate Against Hate, a website launched by the Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip academy and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and academy and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue. Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism

3.19   Channel programme

3.19.1   Safeguarding children is a key role for each school in the trust and the LA, which is implemented through the use of the Channel programme. This service shall be used where a vulnerable student is at risk of being involved in terrorist activities.

3.19.2   In line with statutory duties, each school will cooperate with the local Channel Prevent panel and all partners of the panel as much as is appropriate and reasonably practical.

3.19.3 In cases where the school believes a student is potentially at serious risk of being radicalised, the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher or DSL will make a referral to PREVENT.

3.19.4 The DSL will also support any staff making referrals to the PREVENT programme.

3.19.5 The PREVENT and Channel programmes ensure that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background, receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist-related activity.

3.19.6 The programme identifies individuals at risk, assesses the extent of that risk and develops the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned, with multi-agency cooperation and support from the school.

3.19.7 Each school will keep in mind that an individual's engagement with the PREVENT or Channel programmes is voluntary at all stages.

3.20 Child on child abuse

3.20.1 Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. This can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);

- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm;

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;

- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;

- sexting, also known as youth produced sexual imagery;

- initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

The trust is aware that some children may be particularly vulnerable and have an increased risk of abuse. Each school within the trust will recognise that children with SEND or certain health conditions are three times more likely to be abused by their peers, can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child-on-child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The school will consider extra pastoral support for those children.

The trust understands that all pupils have the right to be safeguarded from harm regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality or disability and will ensure that all schools within the trust give special consideration to, amongst others, children who:

- Have SEND.

- Are vulnerable to being bullied.

- Are looked after or living in unsupportive home situations.

DSLs working in schools within the trust will ensure they appropriately assess all instances of child-on-child abuse, including in cases of image-based abuse, to help determine whether the alleged perpetrator(s) is under the age of 18 or is an adult posing as a child. The DSL will immediately refer the case if it is found that a so-called child-on-child abuse incident involves an adult, e.g. where an adult poses as a child online to groom a child or young person.

All staff will be clear as to the trust's policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

3.21 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school

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

3.21.1 Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQ+ children are at greater risk.

3.21.2 Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;

- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and

- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

3.22 What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence
3.22.1 It is important that all staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

3.22.2 **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

3.22.3 **Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

3.22.4 **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

3.22.5 **What is consent?** Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity, and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

3.22.6 Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;

- sexual "jokes" or taunting;

- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this cross a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and

- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:

- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;

- sexualised online bullying;

- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and

- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;

- upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12th April 2019. Upskirting is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone, of any gender, can be a victim.

3.23   The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

3.23.1   The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

3.23.2   Each school, where it discovers incidents of sexualised behaviours between children, we will respond to this in line with the East Sussex Protocol for Managing Child-on-Child Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools, Settings and Colleges and with reference to the following documents:

- Brooks Traffic Light Tool

- ESCC Communicating with parents: Toolkit for guided conversations: harmful sexual behaviour

- ESCC Supporting children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour

- ESCC Supporting children who have experienced sexual abuse

3.24   Further Information on self-harm and suicidal behaviour

3.24.1   Definition - Self harm, self-mutilation, eating disorders, suicide threats and gestures by a child must always be taken seriously and may be indicative of a serious mental or emotional disturbance.

3.24.2 Refer to the Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for guidance on recognition, reporting and a child presenting at educational establishment. Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures : [ESCC Self harm tool kit](#)

3.25 Further information on private fostering

3.25.1 Parents and carers often fail to notify schools about private fostering arrangements even though they are legally required to notify Children's Services. Often this is because they are unaware of the requirements. They believe that this is a private family arrangement which does not concern anybody else.

3.25.2 Private Fostering definition

Private fostering occurs when a child under 16 (or 18 if the child is disabled) is cared for and lives with an adult who is not their birth parent for 28 days or more. This could be a stepparent (by marriage or civil partnership), grandparent, step grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt.

3.25.3 Private fostering is a private arrangement made by the parent(s), (or those with parental responsibility) for someone to care for their child because they are unable to do so (permanently or temporarily). This may be due to a number of reasons such as parental ill health, a parent going abroad or into prison, a child being bought to the UK to study English or the relationship between the child and parent has broken down.

3.25.4 All staff play an essential role in identifying privately fostered children. If you know a child is being privately fostered, you should advise the parent/carer that they have a legal obligation to report the arrangement to Children Social Care at least six weeks before it happens or within 48 hours if the arrangement is current having been made in an emergency.

3.25.5 All staff should alert their Designated Safeguarding Lead who will ensure this is followed up with Children Social Care and the arrangement is assessed, approved and monitored.

3.26 Children with medical conditions

3.26.1 Children with medical conditions will be supported in accordance with each school's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy and the statutory guidance Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions 2015.

3.26.2 Each school will ensure that arrangements are in place to support children with medical conditions. These arrangements will be informed through liaison with the parents and medical professionals, where appropriate, and dependent on the age and capacity, the child as well.

3.26.3 Most ongoing conditions will require an individual healthcare plan, unless it is agreed that this would be inappropriate and disproportionate.

3.26.4 The healthcare plan will be shared with staff as necessary, to ensure that staff are aware of what arrangements are in place, as well as any emergency procedures.

3.26.5 Systems are in place to ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is kept informed of arrangements for children with medical conditions and is alerted where a concern arises, such as an error with the administering of medicines or intervention, or repeated medical appointments being missed, or guidance or treatments not being followed by the parents or the child.

Please also refer to section 2.2 with regard to neglect of children with medical conditions.

3.27 Host families

3.27.1 When a school arranges a homestay, it should consider what intelligence/information will best inform its assessment of the suitability of the adults in those families who will be responsible for the visiting child

during the stay. It will be for each school to use their professional judgement to decide what it considers what will be relevant. However, to help inform that assessment, the school should obtain a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information. This check will not only establish whether the adults are barred from engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but where criminal record information is disclosed, it will also allow the school to consider, alongside all other intelligence that it has obtained, whether the adult would be a suitable host for a child.

3.27.2 Further consideration should be given whether the homestay then becomes a case of private fostering, in the case where the stay exceeds 28 days.

4 Recognition – what to look for

4.1 Staff members should refer to the detailed information about the categories of abuse and risk indicators in KCSIE Part one for further guidance.

4.2 In an abusive relationship, the child may:

- appear frightened of their parent(s)

- act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development, although full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups

- however, they may also not exhibit any signs of stress/fear

4.3 In an abusive relationship, the parent or carer may:

- persistently avoid child health services and treatment of the child's illnesses

- have unrealistic expectations of the child

- frequently complain about or to the child and fail to provide attention or praise

- be absent

- be misusing substances

- persistently refuse to allow access on home visits by professionals

- be involved in domestic violence and abuse

- be socially isolated

4.4 Serious case reviews, now known as safeguarding practice reviews, have found that parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and mental health problems, sometimes referred to as the 'toxic trio', if they coexist in a family could mean significant risks to children. Problems can be compounded by poverty; frequent house moves or eviction.

4.5 Staff should be aware that children with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability

- children with special educational needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to bullying and often show no outward signs

- communication issues can be a barrier to effective safeguarding.

5 Allegations and disclosures of child-on-child abuse

5.1 The trust believes that all children have a right to attend and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the trust's schools and other children.

5.2   Child-on-child abuse does not occur in a vacuum, it occurs in a society where there are structures and norms that shape young people's views, experiences, and behaviours, as well as responses to them.

5.3   Gender can be a factor within child-on-child abuse, in that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boy's perpetrators.

5.4   All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, it will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

5.5   There are different forms of child-on-child abuse, such as:

- 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

- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)

- Sexual violence. This may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violent

- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

- Upskirting

- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying

- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers

5.6   All reports of child-on-child abuse will be logged on the school's safeguarding portal (MyConcen) and to the DSL to record on the safeguarding files for each child involved. The Head of Year will analyse the information and take action as necessary and record the outcome. The DSL is responsible for checking actions and outcomes before closing a concern.

5.7   In the case of physical abuse, consideration will be given as to whether it may be appropriate for each school to make use of their behaviour or anti-bullying policy and processes to resolve the issue.

5.8   In the case of sexting, each school will follow the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) advice for schools and colleges on responding to sexting incidents. Based upon this, when determining a response, each school will consider:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people

- If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care

- If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person – in most cases, imagery will not be viewed

- What further information is required to decide on the best response

- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown.

- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services

- Any relevant facts about the young people involved which would influence risk assessment

- If there is a need to contact another school, college setting or individual

- Whether to contact parents or carers of the students involved - in most cases parents/carers will be involved

5.9   Each school will always make a referral to the police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult

- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)

- What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent

- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the imagery is under 13

- There is reason to believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

5.10   In the case of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- Each school recognises that reports of this nature are likely to be complex

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

Important considerations will include:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;

- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;

- The ages of the children involved;

- The developmental stages of the children involved;

- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?

- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;

- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or academy or college staff; and

- Other related issues and wider context.

5.11   Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals are likely to be complex and may involve a range of behaviours. Each school will manage reports of such activity on a case-by-case basis applying the same principles and considerations as outlined above for other types of child –on-child abuse.

5.12   Referrals to other agencies

- Any report which involves activity which is suspected of being a crime: the school will refer to the police.

- Any report which involves activity which places a child at level 3 or 4 on the continuum of need: the school will refer to children's social care.

- Each school will give consideration to what other agencies or resources might be of support to children and families, seeking consent and making referrals as necessary.

5.13 Responding to reports of child-on-child abuse

5.13.1 All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

5.13.2 When being made aware of a disclosure or report of child on child abuse all staff will:

- Not promise confidentiality

- Be supportive and respectful of the child;

- Listen carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc.;

- Record the facts as the child presents them, without reflecting the personal opinion of the note taker as such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation;

- If possible, have two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible; and informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report

- Staff will consider what support might be needed for the alleged perpetrators as well as the victims

5.14 Risk Assessment

5.14.1 When there has been a report of child on child abuse the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, based upon the ESCC Protocol for [Managing Child on Child Harmful Sexual Behaviour](#) in Schools using The Brook Traffic Light Tool or ESCC screening. This plan will be recorded using the ESCC Safeguarding Risk Reduction Plan (SRRP) for Academies and Education Settings.

5.14.2 In all cases of child-on-child abuse, but especially those involving sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, the risk and needs assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support;

- The alleged perpetrator; and

- All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them;

5.14.3 Risk assessments or the SRRP will be recorded in writing and will be kept under review. At all times, each school will be actively considering the risks posed to all students and putting proportionate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

5.14.4 The DSL will engage with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. Any such professional assessments will be used to inform each school's approach to supporting and protecting students and update any school-based risk assessment or SRRP.

5.15 Minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

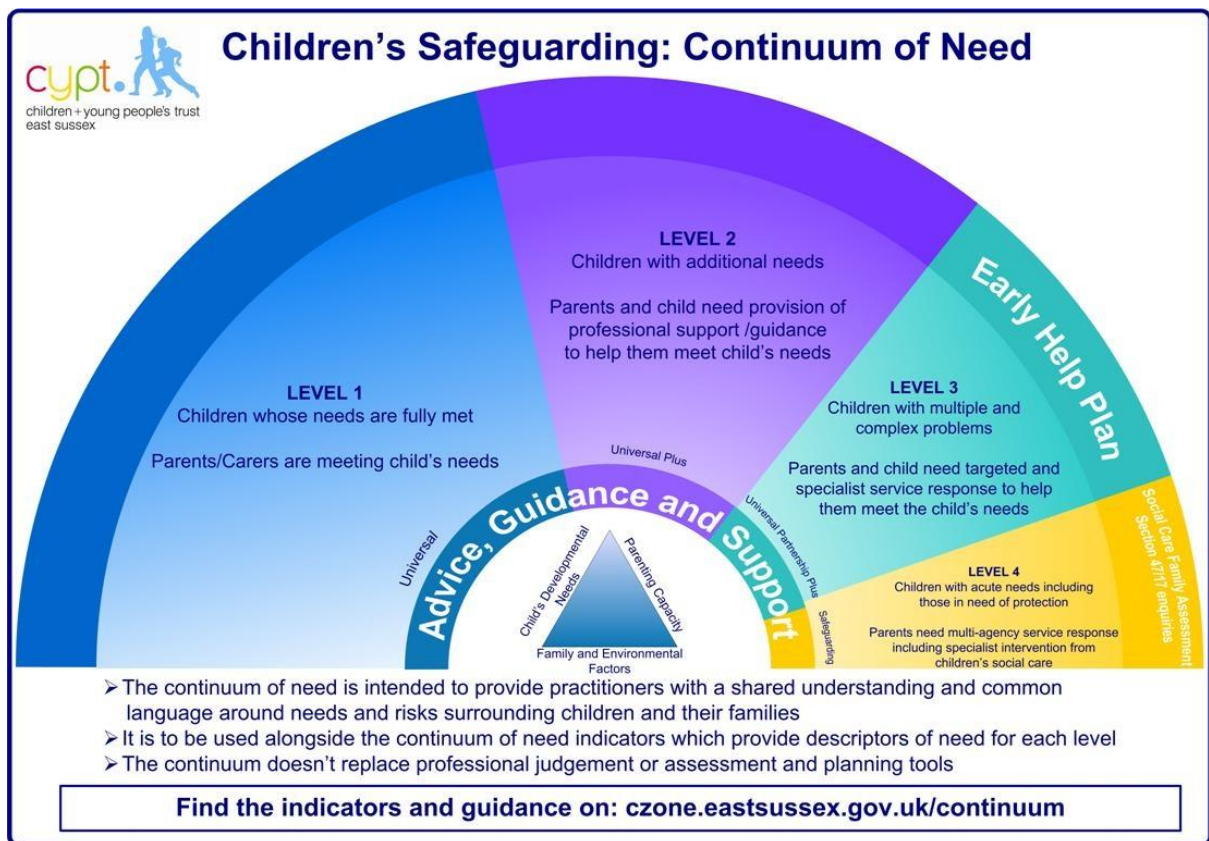5.15.1 Each school will provide a developmentally appropriate PSHE (PD) syllabus which develops students' understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe. The syllabus will be delivered via assemblies, tutor time session and PSHE lessons in accordance with KCSIE 2025.

5.15.2 Each school has systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, believed and valued.

5.15.3 Each school delivers targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those students identified as being at risk. External services are also sometimes used to support this.

5.15.4 Where the school is advised that a student may present a risk to other children, due to a factor outside of school, such as having spent time in custody, or experienced abuse themselves, a Safeguarding Risk Reduction Plan will be completed to ensure that all children at the school can be safeguarded.

6 Safeguarding children on the continuum of need

6.1 The Safeguarding Children on the Continuum of Need has been developed so that everyone working with children in East Sussex has a common language for understanding the needs and risks surrounding children and their families. It is important that all members of staff are familiar with it.

6.2 The Continuum of Need shows that a child's or family's additional needs can be on a range from one to four, and that needs can shift from early help to child protection and back to preventative early help. It covers children whose needs are increasing as well as children whose needs are decreasing after Children's Social Care involvement. The Continuum of Need will help practitioners to identify the right level of support for the child in the least intrusive way while keeping the child safe.

Children's Safeguarding: Continuum of Need

LEVEL 2
Children with additional needs

Parents and child need provision of professional support /guidance to help them meet child's needs

LEVEL 1
Children whose needs are fully met

Parents/Carers are meeting child's needs

LEVEL 3
Children with multiple and complex problems

Parents and child need targeted and specialist service response to help them meet the child's needs

LEVEL 4
Children with acute needs including those in need of protection

Parents need multi-agency service response including specialist intervention from children's social care

Early Help Plan

Advice, Guidance and Support

Child's Developmental Needs / Parenting Capacity / Family and Environmental Factors

> The continuum of need is intended to provide practitioners with a shared understanding and common language around needs and risks surrounding children and their families
> It is to be used alongside the continuum of need indicators which provide descriptors of need for each level
> The continuum doesn't replace professional judgement or assessment and planning tools

Find the indicators and guidance on: czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/continuum

6.3 The Continuum of Need identifies four levels of need.

Level 1:

- children who are achieving expected outcomes
- their needs are met by their parents/carers and by accessing universal services such as health and education
- they do not have additional needs

Level 2:

- children with additional needs

- parents need professional support or guidance to help them meet their children's needs

- extra support can usually be provided by agencies that already know the family, e.g. their pre-school, school or college or NHS community services such as Health Visiting

Level 3 :

- children with multiple and complex needs

- children and parents need targeted early help or specialist services to meet the children's needs

- needs are met through multi-agency support and the use of Early Help Plans

Level 4:

- children with acute needs, including those in need of protection

- children and parents need multi-agency responses which include specialist intervention from Children's Social Care through the family assessment process

6.4   By referring to the Continuum of Need and indicators, each school can identify when assessment and support for a child and family need 'stepping up' to a referral to Social Care and when the needs of a child and their family have been reduced enough for them the be 'stepped down' to early help services.

7   What action to take if you have concerns about a child

7.1   When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

7.2   If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or deputy DSL.

7.3   If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

7.4   Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action.

7.5   The DSL or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from SPoA. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

7.6   All concerns should be reported via the MyConcern link. If this is not available to a member of staff for any reason the Welfare Referral Forms which can be found in the HR office, staff room or in Student Support where applicable should be used.

8   Dealing with a disclosure made by a child – advice for all members of staff

8.1   If a child discloses that he or she has been abused or experienced harm in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should follow this guidance.

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief

- Only ask questions when necessary to clarify

- Accept what is being said

- Allow the child to talk freely – do not put words in the child's mouth

- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault

- Do not make promises that you may not be able to keep

- Do not promise confidentiality – it may be necessary to refer the child to Children's Social Care

- Stress that it was the right thing to tell

- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator

- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told

- Inform the DSL without delay

- Report the concern via MyConcern or complete the welfare concern form and pass it to the DSL

Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful, consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL and/or HR

9 Discussing concerns with the family and the child – advice for the Designated Safeguarding Lead

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

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

9.3 **It is important to consider the child's wishes and feelings**, if age appropriate, as part of planning what action to take in relation to concerns about their welfare.

9.4 When talking to children, you should take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, which may not be English. It is also important to consider how a child with additional needs may need support in communicating.

9.5 How you talk to a child will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns. You may need to seek advice from Children's Social Care or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised.

9.6 If concerns have arisen as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.

9.7 **It is expected that you discuss your concerns with the parents and seek their consent to making a referral to Children's Social Care, unless you consider that this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm**.

9.8 **You do not need the parents' consent to make a referral if you consider the child is in need of protection**, although parents will ultimately be made aware of which organisation made the referral.

9.9 If parents refuse to give consent to a referral but you decide to continue, you need to make this clear to Children's Social Care.

9.10 **If you decide to refer the child without the parents' consent, make sure to record this with a full explanation of your decision.**

9.11 When you make your referral, you should agree with Children's Social Care what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when.

10 Early help for children and families

10.1 Most parents can look after their children without the need of help other than from their family or friends. However, some parents may need additional help from the school or other services such as the NHS. Providing help early is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

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

- is disabled 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 anti-social 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;

- Have family members in custody or is affected by parental offending;

- 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.

The school will not limit its support to pupils affected by the above and will be mindful of a variety of additional circumstances in which pupils may benefit from early help, for example, if they are:

- Bereaved;

- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online;

- Have recently returned home to their family from care;

- Missing in education, or are persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education.

10.3   Each school will work together with other agencies to provide a coordinated offer of early help, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children December 2023* and local guidance, to any child who needs it.

10.4   Each school will pool its knowledge within the school and with other agencies about which families or children need additional support in a range of ways so that the school can work out how best to help them. Each school will use the East Sussex Safeguarding Continuum of Need tool to identify what level of need the child or their family has.

10.5   Each school will work closely with targeted early help services and Children's Social Care if we feel families need more support and input, or children are at risk of harm, and we will continue to provide support if other services are also needed.

10.6   Each school will talk to the family about referral to a targeted early help service and explain at there may be a need to involve other professionals, including talking to a social worker about our concerns. We will seek the family's consent for the referral.

10.7   If the family does not consent to an early help service, the school will make a judgement about whether the needs of the child will escalate, or the child will become unsafe without help. If this judgement is that the needs or concerns will escalate, then we will contact the Children's Social Care Single Point of Advice for a consultation with a qualified social worker in order to make a shared decision about whether the level of concerns calls for a referral to Children's Social Care.

11   Children's social care-led responses to concerns about a child

11.1   Once Children's Social Care has accepted a referral as needing a social-care-led response (Level 4 of the Continuum of Need), the school will cooperate with Children's Social Care and the police in any emergency action they take using their legal powers for immediate protection of the child.

11.2   Each school will participate in any multi-agency discussions (strategy discussions), if invited to do so, and share information about the child and their family to plan the response to concerns.

11.3   Each school will ensure that a relevant staff member participates in all initial and review child protection conferences, if invited to attend. The staff member will work together with other agencies to discuss the need for and agree to an outcome-focused child protection plan and will ensure that the child's wishes and views are considered in their own right in planning.

11.4   If it is members of the core group to implement a child protection plan, each school will ensure a relevant staff member participates in all core group meetings.

11.5   Each school will ensure that all actions allocated as part of the outcome-focused plan are completed, whether a child protection plan or a family support plan, in a timely way.

11.6   Each school will continue to monitor children once their plans are ended to ensure that they are supported and kept safe.

12   Information sharing and consent

12.1   It is essential that people working with children can confidently share information as part of their day-to-day work. This is necessary not only to safeguard and protect children from harm but also to work together to support families to improve outcomes for all.

12.2   Each school may have to share information about parents or carers, such as their medical history, disability or substance misuse issues, for investigations of child abuse carried out by Children's Social Care.

12.3   Each school will proactively seek out information as well as sharing it. This means checking with other professionals whether they have information that helps us to be as well informed as possible when working to support children.

12.4   The Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 are not barriers to sharing information and **do not change duties under safeguarding**. They are there to ensure that personal information is managed in a sensible way and that a balance is struck between a person's privacy and public protection.

12.5   Each school should: be sharing any concerns with parents at an early stage, unless this would put a child at greater risk or compromise an investigation. Parents need to know what schools responsibilities are for safeguarding and protecting children and that this involves sharing information about them with other professionals.

12.6   Be clear about the purpose of sharing confidential information and only share as much as you need to achieve your purpose.

12.7   Try to get consent from parents (or the child, if they have sufficient understanding[1]) to share information, if possible. However, **schools do not need consent if they have serious concerns about a child's safety and well-being. If a decision is made to share information without consent, it should be recorded with a full explanation of your decision.**

12.8   **Consent should not be sought from parents or carers** (or the child, if they have sufficient understanding), if:

---

[1] Children aged 12 or over may generally be expected to have sufficient understanding. Younger children may also have sufficient understanding. All people aged 16 and over are presumed, in law, to have the capacity to give or withhold their consent, unless there is evidence to the contrary.

- it would place a child at increased risk of harm; or

- it would place an adult at risk of serious harm; or

- it would prejudice a criminal investigation; or

- it would lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child; or

- required by law or a court order to share information.

12.9   **Consent is not necessary** in cases where Children's Social Care are making child protection enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Information needs to be shared with Children's Social Care; staff members must make sure to record what information has been shared.

12.10   **Consent is necessary**, for:

- Children's Social Care investigations or assessments of concerns under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Children's Social Care will assume that we have obtained consent from the parents to share information unless they are made aware that there is a specific issue about consent. This must be discussed with a social worker in the Single Point of Advice.

- Early help (level 3) referrals and assessments. Assessments are undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents or carers.

12.11   If there is any doubt about the need to seek consent, advice should be sought from the DSL or from the Children's Social Care Single Point of Advice.

12.12   Records must be kept of decisions to share information, with or without consent, and the reasons for it. Remember also that it is just as important to keep a record of reasons why a decision was made not to share information as to why it was.

13   Record keeping

13.1   Accurate and timely record keeping is an important part of each school's accountability to children and their families and will help our schools in meeting our key responsibility to respond appropriately to welfare concerns about children.

13.2   Records should be factual, accurate, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should support monitoring, risk assessment and planning for children and enable informed and timely decisions about appropriate action to take.

13.3   All staff members, trustees, LGC members, volunteers, contractors and activity providers should ensure that they record and report safeguarding concerns in line with guidance from the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in with "Keeping *Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns Guidance for Early Years Settings, Academies and Colleges July 2017"*.

13.4   The DSL will ensure that records are maintained accurately for children with safeguarding concerns and that individual files are created and maintained in line with requirements of the above guidance.

14   Professional challenge and disagreements

14.1   Working with children and families, and in particular child protection work, is stressful and complex, as well as involving uncertainty and strong feelings. To ensure that the best decisions are made for children, we need to be able to challenge one another's practice.

14.2   Each school will promote a culture that enables all staff members to raise, without fear of repercussions, any concerns they may have about the management of safeguarding in the trust. This may include raising concerns about decisions, action and inaction by colleagues about individual children. If

necessary, staff members will speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Headteacher, Executive Headteacher, or the chair of trustees.

14.3   Cooperation across agencies is crucial; professionals need to work together, in their skills and experience, to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences and case management.

14.4   If there are any professional disagreements with practitioners from other agencies, the DSL, Headteacher or the Executive Headteacher will raise concerns with the relevant agency's safeguarding lead in line with guidance in the Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

14.5   If the school disagrees with the child protection conference chair's decision, the DSL or the Headteacher will consider whether they wish to challenge it further and raise the matter with Children's Services Head of Safeguarding.

15   Safer recruitment

15.1   The trust has robust recruitment and vetting procedures to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

15.2   Each school's job advertisements and application packs make explicit reference to the trust's commitment to safeguarding children, including compliance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process and clear statements in the job description and person specification about the staff member's safeguarding responsibilities.

15.3   All staff members who have contact with children, young people and families will have appropriate pre-employment checks, which will be scrutinised, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: September 2025.*

15.4   At least one member on every short listing and interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that safer recruitment training is kept up to date at their school.

15.5   The headteacher, supported by HR is responsible for ensuring that their school's **single central record** is accurate and up to date and this is regularly monitored by the nominated safeguarding LGC link governor.

16   Procedure for managing allegations of abuse made against educational establishment staff members and volunteers

Within this document the term "staff" should be broadly read as any adult working within the school, whether directly employed, providing a contracted service, a one-off service such as a supply teacher or a volunteer, such as a governor or trustee.

16.1   The trust's aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children at our trust's schools. The trust recognises that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

16.2   Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur, they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that some allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

16.3   The trust will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in each of our schools are safe to work with children. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 are adhered to and will follow the flowchart on page 24.

16.4   If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works in our trust which indicates that they have behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work

with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher immediately. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher they should inform the Executive Headteacher and should an allegation be made about the Executive Headteacher, this will be reported to the chair of trustees. In the event that neither the Executive Headteacher nor chair of trustees are not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Executive Headteacher or the vice chair of trustees.

16.5   The Headteacher, Executive Headteacher or chair of trustees will follow the flowchart in Appendix B. No member of staff or the board of trustees will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from Single Point of Advice or LADO.

16.6   Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher, Executive Headteacher or chair of trustees should follow the flowchart in Appendix B and make the appropriate contact directly.

16.7   Supporting people:

- Each school, together with Children's Social Care and the police, if they are involved, will consider the impact on the child concerned and provide support as appropriate.

- The Headteacher/Executive Headteacher will ensure that the child and family are kept informed of the progress of the investigation, to the extent that is appropriate and does not compromise the investigation, confidentiality or the rights of the staff member involved.

- The Personnel/HR lead for the organisation will be contacted at the earliest opportunity for advice in relation to the investigation of any allegation in line with each school's Disciplinary Policy, where appropriate.

- The staff member who is the subject of the allegation will be advised to contact their union, professional association or a colleague for support, (depending on the outcome of the safeguarding strategy meeting which is normally chaired by the LADO).

- The Personnel/HR lead for the organisation will ensure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support, if necessary, through occupational health or welfare arrangements.

- The Headteacher will appoint a named representative to keep the staff member updated on the progress of the investigation; this will continue during any police or section 47 investigation or disciplinary investigation.

- The legislation imposing restrictions makes clear that "publication" of material that may lead to the identification of the teacher who is the subject of the allegation is prohibited. "Publication" includes "any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public". This means that a parent who, for example, published details of the allegation on a social networking site would be in breach of the reporting restrictions (if what was published could lead to the identification of the teacher by members of the public).

16.8   Each school has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our trust, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or the Personnel/HR lead for the organisation. In the case of a member of teaching staff, a decision will be made about whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

16.9   In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025, under no circumstances will the school decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

16.10   Where there are conduct issues with a supply teacher, which may not reach the threshold for safeguarding, the school will consult the LADO nonetheless.

16.11   The agency for the supply teacher will be fully involved and expected to co-operate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social services.

16.12   Where directed to do so by the LADO, police and/or children's social services, the school will support any safeguarding investigation by collecting the facts when an allegation is made.

16.13   In this respect it may be that the school takes a lead on this safeguarding element of investigation.

17   The use of "reasonable force"

17.1   There are circumstances when it will be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.

17.2   Please see the trust's behaviour policy for further guidance on the use of reasonable force and restrictive physical interventions

17.3   When managing incidents of reasonable force and restrictive physical interventions each school will consider whether to liaise with the LADO, where it is thought that the physical intervention may lead to an allegation.

Appendix A

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with support from Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

1   Managing referrals

1.1   The designated safeguarding lead will:

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to East Sussex children's social care as required.

- Support staff who make referrals to East Sussex children's social care.

- Refer cases to the PREVENT programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.

- Support staff who make referrals to the PREVENT programme.

- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.

- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required, using the NPCC-When to call the police guidance to inform this decision.

- Liaise with agencies providing early help services and coordinate referrals from the school to targeted early help services for children in need of support. Monitor any cases referred to early help and consider referral to children's services where the situation does not improve.

- Report any accidental injuries, which have occurred within an Early Years setting, to Ofsted and the relevant SLES consultant in the Early Years Improvement Team

2   Work with others

2.1   The designated safeguarding lead will:

- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations

- As required, liaise with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.

- Liaise with staff (especially student support staff, SENCOs and SLT) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.

- Cooperate with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

- Attend, or ensure other relevant staff members attend, child protection conferences, core group meetings and other multi-agency meetings, as required.

- Liaise with other agencies working with the child, share information as appropriate and contribute to assessments.

- Play a pivotal role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

3   Training

3.1   The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, this includes online safety and understanding the

filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. This training will be updated at least every two years.

3.2   The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training.

3.3   In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including the East Sussex continuum of need and the SPOA referral arrangements.

- Have a working knowledge of how East Sussex children's social care conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

- Ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the trust's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.

- Organise whole-school safeguarding and child protection training for all staff members regularly and provide updates at least annually. Ensure staff members who miss the training receive it by other means, e.g. by joining another academy's training.

- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.

- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and decisions made, whether or not referrals have been made, which are in line with East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance; *Keep Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.*

- Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety (including when children are online at home) and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at the school.

- Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.

- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the trust may put in place to protect them.

- Maintain accurate records of staff induction and training.

4   Raise awareness

4.1   The designated safeguarding lead will:

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

- Ensure the trust's safeguarding and child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies regarding this.

- Ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.

- Link with the East Sussex LSCB to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

- Help promote stronger educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced with teachers and school leadership staff.

- This will include ensuring that the school, and staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

- Ensure that staff understand that children who have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them susceptible to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning behaviour and positive mental health.

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

- Ensure that staff are 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.

5   Child protection file

5.1   Where children leave the school the DSL will ensure their safeguarding and child protection file is transferred (where applicable using MyConcern) to the new education provider as soon as possible (ESCC best practice is that this should be actioned within five working days). This should be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools should ensure key staff such as DSLs and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

5.2   In addition to the safeguarding and child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new educational establishment to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.
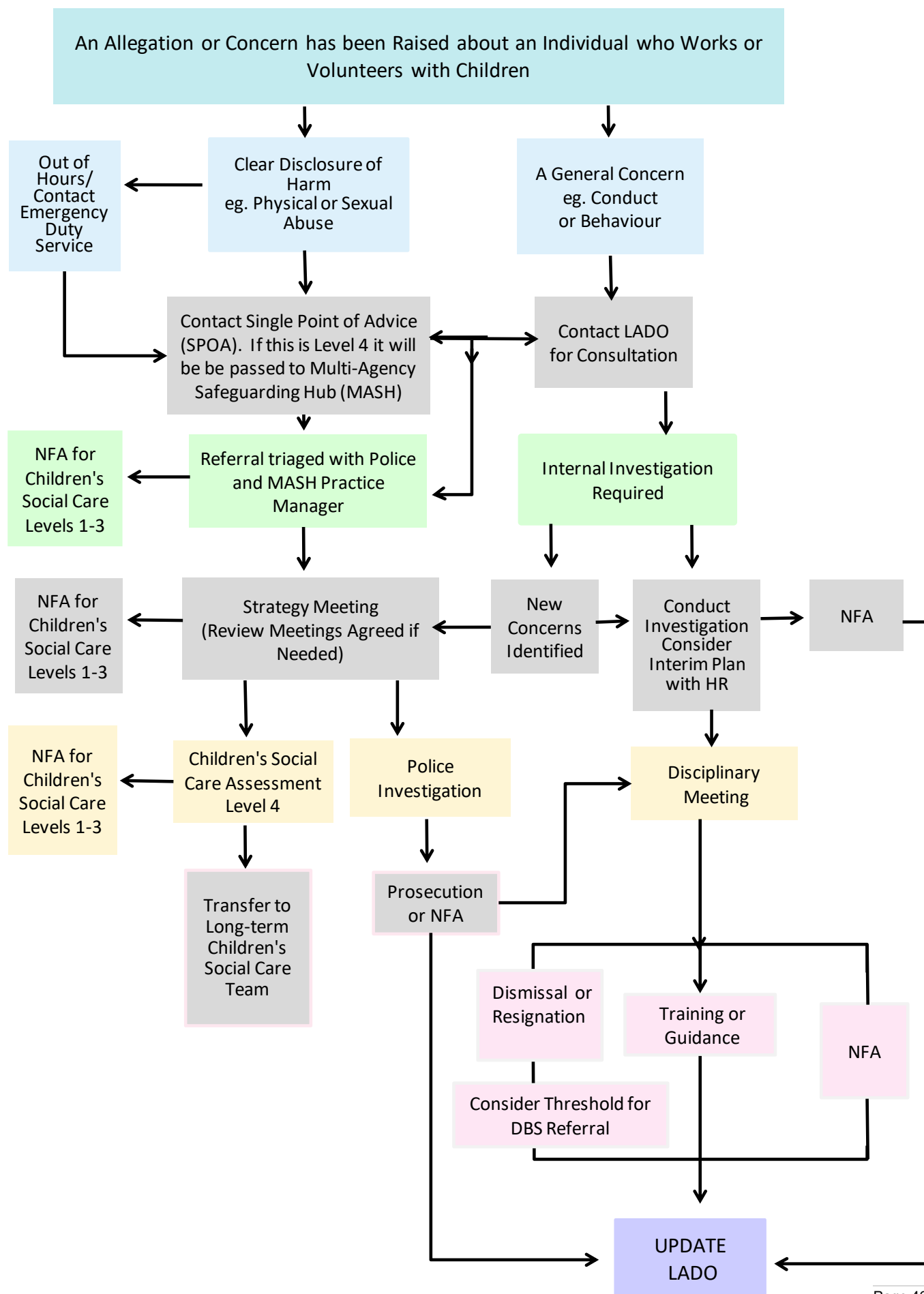
6   Availability

6.1   During term time the DSL or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the trust to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

6.2   Where any activities take place outside of regular school hours, the school will ensure that a member of the DSL team is available to be contacted during this time.

7   Quality assurance

7.1   Monitor the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of child protection and welfare concerns files (at a minimum twice a year).

7.2   Complete an audit of their school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

7.3   Provide regular reports, to the board of trustees detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and the number of children with child protection plans and other relevant data.

7.4   Take lead responsibility for remedying any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

Managing Allegations Flowchart

An Allegation or Concern has been Raised about an Individual who Works or Volunteers with Children

Clear Disclosure of Harm
eg. Physical or Sexual Abuse

A General Concern
eg. Conduct or Behaviour

Out of Hours/ Contact Emergency Duty Service

Contact Single Point of Advice (SPOA). If this is Level 4 it will be be passed to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Contact LADO for Consultation

NFA for Children's Social Care Levels 1-3

Referral triaged with Police and MASH Practice Manager

Internal Investigation Required

NFA for Children's Social Care Levels 1-3

Strategy Meeting (Review Meetings Agreed if Needed)

New Concerns Identified

Conduct Investigation Consider Interim Plan with HR

NFA

NFA for Children's Social Care Levels 1-3

Children's Social Care Assessment Level 4

Police Investigation

Disciplinary Meeting

Transfer to Long-term Children's Social Care Team

Prosecution or NFA

Dismissal or Resignation

Training or Guidance

NFA

Consider Threshold for DBS Referral

UPDATE LADO

Appendix C:

This policy contains a number of acronyms used in the education sector. These acronyms are listed below alongside their descriptions.

Acronym	Long form	Description
AI	Artificial intelligence	Computer systems and software that are able to perform tasks that ordinarily require human intelligence, such as decision-making and the creation of images.
CCE	Child criminal exploitation	A form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
CSCS	Children's social care services	The branch of the local authority that deals with children's social care.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	A form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
DBS	Disclosure and barring service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body with responsibility for children's services, policy and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DPO	Data protection officer	The appointed person in school with responsibility for overseeing data protection strategy and implementation to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
DSL	Designated safeguarding lead	A member of the senior leadership team who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the school.
EEA	European Economic Area	The Member States of the European Union (EU) and three countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; excluding Switzerland).
EHC plan	Education, health and care plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs for pupils who have significant needs that impact on their learning and access to education. The plan identifies any additional support needs or interventions and the intended impact they will have for the pupil.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	All procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

UK GDPR	The UK General Data Protection Regulation	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation and ensure that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.
HBA	'Honour-based' abuse	So-called 'honour-based' abuse involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community.
HMCTS	HM Courts and Tribunals Service	HM Courts and Tribunals Service is responsible for the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales. HMCTS is an executive agency, sponsored by the Ministry of Justice.
IICSA	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse	The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is analysing case files from the Disclosure and Barring Service to learn more about the behaviours of perpetrators who have sexually abused children in institutions, and to understand institutional responses to these behaviours.
KCSIE	Keeping children safe in education	Statutory guidance setting out schools and colleges' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LA	Local authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.
LAC	Looked-after children	Children who have been placed in local authority care or where children's services have looked after children for more than a period of 24 hours.
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus	Term relating to a community of people, protected by the Equality Act 2010, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or other protected sexual or gender identities.
MAT	Multi-academy trust	A trust established to undertake strategic collaboration and provide education across a number of schools.
NPCC	The National Police Chiefs' Council	The National Police Chiefs' Council is a national coordination body for law enforcement in the UK and the representative body for British police chief officers.
PLAC	Previously looked-after children	Children who were previously in LA care or were looked after by children's services for more than a period of 24 hours. PLAC are also known as care leavers.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which pupils learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all pupils. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction and sexuality, as well as promoting positive relationships.
SCR	Single central record	A statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches and instructors, and volunteers who attend the school in a non-visitor capacity.

SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	A statutory role within all schools maintaining oversight and coordinating the implementation of the school's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy and provision of education to pupils with SEND.
SLT	Senior leadership team	Staff members who have been delegated leadership responsibilities in a school.
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency	An executive agency of the DfE with responsibility for the regulation of the teaching profession.
VSH	Virtual school head	Virtual school heads oversee promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the LA they work for, and all children who currently have, or previously had, a social worker.

Appendix D: Key safeguarding contacts in each academy

Role	Beacon Academy	Uplands Academy	Hailsham Academy
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Hayley Bodman hbodman@beacon-academy.org	Joshua Gilbey jgilbey@uplands-academy.org	Carol Maxwell maxwellc@hccat.net Stephen Adam (Primary) adams@hccat.net
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Jane Prowse jprowse@beacon-academy.org Jill Feltham jfeltham@beacon-academy.org Keith Slattery kslattery@beacon-academy.org Ash McCormack amccormack@beacon-academy.org Sarah Northwood snorthwood@beacon-academy.org Charles Howarth (Sixth Form) chowarth@beacon-academy.org Rob Hutchison (Sixth Form) rhutchinson@beacon-academy.org Suzie Vale svale@beacon-academy.org	Chris Connor cconnor@uplands-academy.org Ellie Cavalier ECavalier@uplands-academy.org Claire Findlay CFindlay@Upland-academy.org Theo Richards TRichards@uplands-academy.org Andrea Harman aharman@uplands-academy.org Rob James rjames@uplands-academy.org Luke Gander lgander@uplands-academy.org Kate Farrell kfarrell@uplands-academy.org Kim Barr kbarr@uplands-academy.org Sue Lambert slambert@uplands-academy.org Will Vockins wvokins@uplands-academy.org	Tom Redman (Primary) redmant@hccat.net Toby Meanwell meanwellt@hccat.net Phil Jones jonesp@hccat.net Simon Marsden marsdens@hccat.net Emma Pearce pearcee@hccat.net Julie Russell russellj@hccat.net Emma Furlong furlonge@hccat.net Jake Lambert lambertj@hccat.net
Designated teacher for looked after children and DDSL	Vicki Horrell vhorrell@beacon-academy.org	Liz Lord llord@uplands-academy.org	Olivia Mockus mockuso@hccat.net
PREVENT Lead	Hayley Bodman	Joshua Gilbey	Carol Maxwell

Chair of trustees	Clare Collins – ccollins@beacon-academy.org		
Executive Headteacher & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Anna Robinson – arobinson@beacon-academy.org		
Nominated trustee for safeguarding and child protection	Rosalind Hancell – rhancell@beacon-academy.org		
Nominated local governor for safeguarding and child protection	Faye Palmer (Beacon) fpalmer@beacon-academy.org	Lauren White (Uplands) lawhite@uplands-academy.org	To be confirmed

Other external contacts:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Safeguarding Officer and Assistant Local Authority Designated Officer	Consultation via the online portal here	
Referrals into Early Help and Social Care:	Single Point of Advice	01323 464222 0-19.SPoA@eastsussex.gov.uk
	Emergency Duty Service – after hours, weekends and public holidays	01273 335906 01273 335905