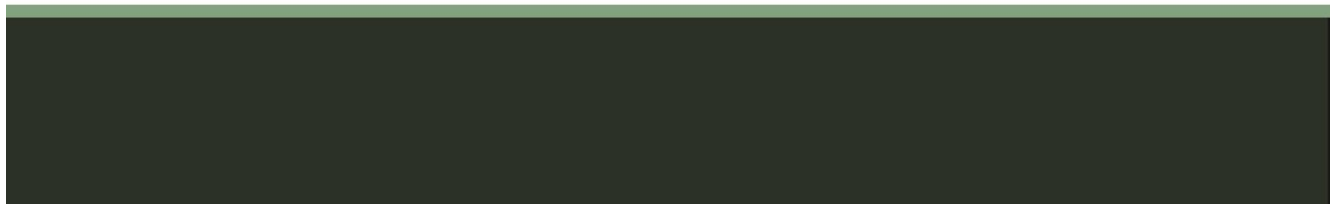




CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES (SAFEGUARDING)

GB Committee Responsible:	Board of Directors
Reviewed by:	Debbie Ferrer
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BENTLEY WOOD HIGH SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES
(SAFEGUARDING)

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1. Introduction – legislative framework

*“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.
All staff should make sure that any decisions made are in the **best interests of the child.**”*
KCSIE

Bentley Wood High School is fully committed to meet its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. We recognise the important part we have to play in identifying children and young people at risk of abuse and neglect and in securing appropriate support for them and their families. *‘Children’ includes everyone under the age of 18’.*

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people means:

- Protecting children from mistreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- And undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Safeguarding updates are regularly built into whole school CPD and all new staff receive induction in safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

This Policy is informed by the following:

DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021

Serious Crime Act 2015

The Prevent Duty, updated 1st April 2021

DfE: Use of reasonable force in schools, July 2013

DfE: Working together to safeguard children, July 2018

DfE: Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, November 2018

DfE: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges September 2021

DfE: Teaching Online Safety in Schools, July 2019

Domestic Abuse Act, 2021

OFSTED – Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (June 2021)

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS December 2020)

The Equality Act 2010

School Attendance: guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2020)

Online Harms Bill (Government White Paper consultation December 2020)

Bentley Wood High School Suite of HR Policies

And should be read in conjunction with the following Policies:

Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

Supporting Students with Medical Conditions

IT and Virtual School

Anti-Bullying

Behaviour and Exclusion

Attendance and Punctuality

Health and Safety Policy
Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation
Relationships and Sex Policy
Young Carers
Whistleblowing (from the Suite of HR Policies)
British Values Statement
Equality information and objectives
Inclusion Policy
RSE Policy
Managing Allegations against Staff

School Procedures:

All parents are made aware of the school's Safeguarding Policy via the website. In order to ensure all staff are clear of our expectations in relation to safeguarding. Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually and all new members of staff given safeguarding training as part of their induction.

Low Level Concerns:

(See Appendix 5)

A Low level concern is any concern, no matter how small, (but gives a sense of unease or 'nagging doubt') that an adult working in a school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with staff code of conduct

- being over friendly with students
- having favourites
- taking photos of students on own mobile phone
- engaging with a student on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door –
- using inappropriate sexualised , intimidating or offensive language

Staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviours from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour in themselves and others.

Whole Staff and Governor's Induction and Training:

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff at Bentley Wood High School. All staff are made aware, through regular CPD training, of their responsibilities, including online safety. All staff receive updates 6 times a year with Teach Talks and weekly updates in the whole staff bulletin. Governors receive annual training and updates in regards to Safeguarding.

All staff members are made aware of their safeguarding duties through their induction training. This includes:

- Read the latest 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021'
- being made aware of the safeguarding team and reporting procedures;
- Aware that safeguarding concerns can happen in or outside of the setting as well as online and the need for an "it could happen here" approach;
- being made aware of the role of the designated safeguarding lead, the head teacher and the Chair of Governors.

All staff are required to read the most recent version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' on a yearly basis (more often if any updates are released) and confirm that they have done so.

Regular Safeguarding training is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

If any member of staff has a safeguarding concern, email the Safeguarding Team: safeguardingteam@bentleywood.harrow.sch.uk without delay.

Alternatively, every member of staff is able to make a referral to children's social care themselves, but if they do so, must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity. The number for Harrow Children's Services is: 020 8901 2690

Any member of school staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and that such concerns will be taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Senior Leadership Team or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistle-blowing channels are available: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>

Further information on whistle blowing can be found in the School's Whistle Blowing Policy found in the Suite of HR Policies and Published on the School Website.

'A child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding'

The child's best interests will remain our paramount focus and this is best achieved by Bentley Wood High School working within the context of the following statutory duties and government guidance which require effective inter-agency cooperation:

Section 175 of the **Education Act 2002** places a statutory duty on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

Section 11 of the **Children Act 2004** sets out the arrangements that schools and other specified settings must make to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These arrangements are outlined within this document so that all staff, families and the local community are provided with a clear understanding of our school's processes and commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in our care.

Our policy and procedures are in accordance with government guidance set out in [Keeping children safe in education](#) (DfE September 2021) (KCSIE) which incorporates a range of related responsibilities for schools and statutory duties introduced to protect children and young people from Female Genital Mutilation and Radicalisation. In particular, this document incorporates **Part one** of KCSIE to ensure that **all staff** understand how to discharge their roles and responsibilities and Part 5 in regards to Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment. This procedure also reflects government advice [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: guide for practitioners](#) (DfE 2015)

The following policy and procedure apply to all governors, staff and volunteers working in our school. We also ensure contractors are aware of the child protection policy and the school take the same responsibilities as they do for staff, volunteers and agency staff.

It is expected that all staff will also be made aware of related internal school policies including, the Bentley Wood High School Behaviour Policy and the staff Code of Conduct (found within the Bentley Wood Suite of HR Policies)

COVID-19 Considerations

We will work closely with parents and carers regarding the safeguarding of all within COVID-19 guidance issued by the DfE, Local Authority and Public Health England. We will work closely with parents and carers to facilitate attendance with due regard to those who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

If parents of pupils with significant risk factors are concerned, we will discuss their concerns and provide reassurance of the measures we are putting in place to reduce the risk in school.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children: Key Contacts:

Bentley Wood High School's Safeguarding Team 2021-2022

The following members of staff are part of the Safeguarding Team:

Janice Howkins: Headteacher

Debbie Ferrer: Assistant Head teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead

Naseema Akbar: Deputy Head teacher

Saqib Ahmed: Assistant Head teacher/Online Safeguarding

Claire Bannon: Associate Assistant Head teacher/HOY 9/Counselling

Jahnvi Manzi: Associate Assistant Head teacher/Sexual Harassment/PSHE/RSE

Sara Lomax: Associate Assistant Head teacher/Head of Sixth Form

Additional Key Colleagues:

Attendance Officer Kavita Mehta

Hannah Stoodley SENCO

Alison Moore: TBWT Safeguarding Lead (as a MAT)(TBC)

Alison Moore: Bentley Wood High School's Safeguarding Governor (2021-2022).

All members of the **Safeguarding Team** and The **SENCO** have undertaken Safeguarding training at level 3 or above and supports the DSL with the gathering information, ensuring record keeping is up to date, working with families and making referrals to external agencies.

In addition, our **Attendance Officer** works closely with external organisations in regards to liaising with families with regard to poor attendance at school or for children who are deemed to be missing in education.

All **Heads of Year** are also trained to at least level three and support the safeguarding team when gathering information, working with families and making referrals.

All members of the **Senior Leadership Team** are also Level 3 trained, with the Head teacher, the DSL and the Deputies also trained in safer recruitment (Level Four).

(i) **Key local contacts for safeguarding children:**

Harrow Children's Social Care & Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	'Golden Number': 020 8901 2690 Emergency Duty Team :weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm-9am during the week: 020 8424 0999
Police	101 or for emergency: 999
FGM - Mandatory reporting	Police on 101
Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against staff (LADO)	Initial referrals via MASH/ Golden Number above. (For on-going cases: 020 8736 6435)
Children and Young People with Disabilities 0-25 years	020 8966 6481
Local multi-agency procedures, guidance and Training: Harrow Safeguarding Children Board	www.harrowlscb.co.uk
NSPCC	0800 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
Government's Whistle-blowing Service via NSPCC Report Line	0800 0285

2. Bentley Wood High School's Safeguarding Mission Statement:

All staff at Bentley Wood High School understand that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

We will:

- Provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.
- Always act in the best interests of the child, taking their wishes and feelings into account.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are recruited using robust 'Safer Recruitment' processes (See Bentley Wood High School Suite of HR Policies).
- Aim to identify concerns early and prevent concerns from escalating. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, providing the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment. See Appendix 1 and Harrow's Early Help offer.
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel respected, safe, and are encouraged to talk and be listened to when they have a worry or concern.
- Require any member of staff who has a concern about a child's welfare to follow the referral process set out in this document.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, take the child's wishes and feelings into account at all stages of the process of intervention.
- Ensure that children who have been abused or neglected will be supported in line with a child protection plan.

- Work with parents/carers to build a supportive relationship and be clear about our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and in particular, when we may need to refer concerns to other agencies.
- Include opportunities across the curriculum, including PSHE and ICT for children to be taught about safeguarding and to develop the skills they need to recognise danger and know where to seek help.
- Students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, cyberbullying, *prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying* in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. This approach is personalised/contextualised for more vulnerable children and some young people with SEND.
- Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” where safeguarding is concerned.

Why is this important to our school?

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect;
- poor record keeping;
- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information or sharing information too slowly and;
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

Contextual Safeguarding

We recognise that some safeguarding incidents or behaviours are associated with wider environmental factors which relate to children and young peoples’ neighbourhoods and/or online communications. Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts. For further information see the University of Bedfordshire’s [Contextual Safeguarding Network](#).

3. Responsibilities

(i) The Local Governing Body and The Bentley Wood Trust Board

It is the responsibility of our Local Governing Body and The Bentley Wood Trust Board to ensure that our school complies with its legislative duties and has regard to Government guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021* to ensure that our school’s policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law.

This responsibility includes understanding the local criteria for action and assessment and supplying information as requested by the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group).

Our Local Governing Body and Trust Board will:

- Designate a lead governor for child protection and safeguarding at a Local Level who will oversee the school's policy and practice and champion safeguarding issues. Ensure there is a MAT Safeguarding Lead at Trust Level.
- Nominate a member of the Local Governing body (usually the Chair) to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within the senior management team.
- Ensure that policies and procedures are in place, which are compliant with government guidance and local Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements. These should be reviewed annually and staff should be encouraged to contribute to their development. These should be made available publicly via the website or other means.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers access appropriate levels of child protection and safeguarding induction and training, including online safety. In addition, all staff should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (e.g. via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Liaise closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and receive regular reports to monitor procedures and practice and ensure compliance.
- Ensure that staff understand the process and principles for sharing information, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016.
- Ensure that safe recruitment procedures are in place and are applied for all staff and volunteers to ensure suitability to work with children, including the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training. See 'Recruitment' in Bentley Wood High School's Suite of HR Policies.
- Ensure that Allegations Management procedures are in place and embedded across the school.
- Ensure that other related procedures are in place and embedded e.g. the staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policy.
- Ensure that appropriate responses to children who go missing from education, particularly repeat occasions are in place to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure that other related procedures e.g. FGM, Anti-bullying – Peer on Peer abuse, Preventing Radicalisation, Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery are in place and embedded (see Appendix 1: Further Information – Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances).
- Ensure any deficiencies in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.

- Ensure that staff are equipped to respond to the needs of vulnerable children including those with disabilities and those who are Looked After by the Local Authority.
- Ensure that the curriculum supports children in recognising and responding to risks, including ICT.
- Take a proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff and volunteers.

(ii) Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, **Debbie Ferrer**, will take responsibility for all child protection referrals and ensure that adequate information is sought to enable a decision to be made on whether to refer the matter to Children's Services when there is a significant concern. She will be responsible for ensuring all referrals are completed in a timely manner and followed up to ensure the well-being and safety of the child. If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, she will press for re-consideration to ensure all concerns have been addressed.

ALL referrals should be sent in to MASH – e-mail: duty&assess@harrow.gov.uk

It is recognised that any matter concerning child protection is confidential, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information on a need to know basis only.

All parents will be made aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility with regard to safeguarding referrals when their child starts at the school and of how to raise a concern regarding safeguarding with the school.

The DSL will liaise with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group) and work with other agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*.

Our DSL will:

- Undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. Training should be updated every two years with regular updates (at least annually) on developments in between, e.g. via e-bulletins, forums for DSLs, and reading time, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.
- Act as focal point for staff concerns and liaise with the Local Authority and other agencies in accordance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*.
- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to Harrow Children's Social Care via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Refer all cases to the police where a crime has been committed.

For the full Role Description for the DSL see Appendix 2.

The Headteacher's responsibility:

The Headteacher will ensure that the Safeguarding Policy adopted by the Local Governing Body and The Bentley Wood Trust Board is fully implemented and followed by all staff. In addition, she will ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Teachers to discharge their responsibilities and ensure that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children. Such concerns will be addressed sensitively

and effectively in a timely manner, in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies. The Headteacher plays a key role in the managing of allegations against staff and volunteers.

The Headteacher will also coordinate any allegations against a member of staff. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, this will be referred to the Chair of Governors.

An allegation against the Chair of Governors should be reported directly to the LADO.

Harrow's LADO's contact details are: Rosalind South 020 8736 6435
Rosalind.South@harrow.gov.uk

What all staff should look out for:

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 at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation, or FGM
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse, or a parent in prison
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

Thresholds for Intervention:

The DSL will decide upon the most appropriate course of action and whether the concerns should be referred to Children's Social Care – refer to [Harrow Thresholds Guidance](#). If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Social Care the parent will be informed, unless to do so would place the child at further risk or undermine the collection of evidence e.g. obtaining forensic evidence. All concerns, discussion and decisions will be recorded in writing.

N.B. Informing parents does not require seeking their consent to share the information with professionals who need to know.

The DSL will provide guidance on the appropriate action. Options will include:

- Managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes;
- An early help assessment or;
- A referral for statutory services e.g. the child is or might be in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

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

practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to Children's Social Care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

Children in Need – A child in need is defined under the *Children Act 1989* as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. The Local Authority is required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the *Children Act 1989*.

Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm - Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the *Children Act 1989* if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

4. Procedures:

General

- (i) It is the responsibility of every member of staff and volunteer at Bentley Wood High School to know, understand and follow our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. They should maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned and know what to look for.
- (ii) If any member of staff or volunteer is concerned about a child s/he must inform a DSL immediately. They must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The written record must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations or what has been said.
- (iii) Where there is a child protection concern, allegation or disclosure the DSL will make an immediate call to Children's Social Care to alert or to consult with them. The Multi Agency Referral Form will be sent by the DSL.
- (iv) If in exceptional circumstance a DSL 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 Children's Social Care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.
- (v) If a member of staff disagrees about the level of concern and feels that a child has not been protected, then any member of staff can make a direct referral to Children's Social Care – refer to HSCB guidance on multi-agency resolution of professional disagreements
- (vi) Within one working day of a referral being made, Children's Social Care should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and decide about the next steps and the type of response that is required. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.
- (vii) If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the DSL as required).

- (viii) If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following the HSCB guidance on multi-agency resolution of professional disagreements to ensure that their concerns are addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

When concerned about a child:

All staff and volunteers should be aware that the main categories of abuse include, Physical, Emotional, Sexual Abuse and Neglect (see Appendix 4). Training should equip staff to help identify the indicators of harm, but in general in an abusive relationship a child may:

- Appear frightened of a parent or others in the household e.g. siblings;
- Appear frightened of someone outside of the home, including a peer. This includes within the school setting;
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/ his age and development (full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and cultural backgrounds);
- Display insufficient sense of boundaries or lack stranger awareness;
- Appear wary of adults and display a 'frozen watchfulness' or appear noticeably withdrawn.

Dealing with a disclosure:

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused or neglected, the member of staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief, allowing the child to talk freely and at their own pace;
- The School operates "with the best interests of the child at heart" and there are suitable means by which children can say what is happening to them and know that they will be heard.
- Students will speak to a 'trusted adult' in order to be able to confidently report abuse, and know their concerns will be treated seriously.
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises, particularly about maintaining confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to other agencies;
- Reassure the child that they are not at fault and they were right to tell someone;
- Listen and only ask questions when it is necessary to obtain clarification;
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator;
- Make a written record as soon as possible, using the child's language when relaying what they said (do not include the personal opinion of the note taker);
- Pass the information to the DSL without delay

Confidentiality and Communicating with Parents:

All staff in schools have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other specified professionals, particularly investigative agencies (Children's Social Care and the Police).

If a child confides in you and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important to tell the child in a sensitive manner and appropriate to their development that you cannot promise complete confidentiality, but explain what you will do next and that information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to help.

Staff/volunteers who receive sensitive information about children and their families should therefore only share information with appropriate professionals.

Parents should be made aware of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and that these are available on our school's website.

Parents should be informed prior to referrals being made to other agencies, unless to do so might place the child at further risk or cause evidence to be removed or destroyed. The DSL will ensure that our school's information sharing arrangements comply with the DfE's [Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners](#)

Any written communications containing sensitive information must only be sent to other professionals on a need to know basis using secure mail processes e.g. secure email.

Record Keeping:

When a child protection concern has been identified, reported or disclosed, A senior member of the Safeguarding Team should:

- Record concern as soon as possible using CPOMS.
- Not destroy any original notes – these are sometimes required by a court.
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Use a body map/ chart to indicate the position of any visible injuries.
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.
- Make a record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.
- If there are paper copies of disclosures, sign and date your notes, which must be given to the DSL promptly.
- Sign and date the notes

The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the [Education \(Pupil Information - England\) Regulation 2005](#).

Transfer of files/ records:

When a child leaves our school, our DSL will ensure that their child protection file, if they have one, is transferred securely to the new school or college as soon as possible and ensure that the relevant member of staff in the new establishment is made aware. For further guidance see [HSCB Guidance on the transfer of a CP or Safeguarding file to another educational setting](#).

6. Information Sharing:

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. *The Data Protection Act 2018* and GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

The Data Protection Act specifies safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information (special category personal data) without consent. For further information click on these links:

[Information Commissioner's Office;](#)
[GDPR in schools FAQs;](#)

Information Sharing: The Seven Golden Rules DfE July 2018.
When to Call the Police: Guidance for Colleges and Schools 2020

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

7. Safer Workforce

Safer Recruitment - Bentley Wood High School has a separate Recruitment Policy (found within the Bentley Wood High School Suite of HR Policies) which specifies how all staff and volunteers must be recruited, following robust recruitment and selection process, including DBS and thorough reference checks.

The aims of the Recruitment Policy are to help appoint the most suitable people to work with our pupils and to deter, reject or identify people who might harm pupils or are otherwise unsuitable to work or volunteer in our school

We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including volunteers and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, collecting and verifying references, checking previous employment history, qualifications, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, Barred List Check, Disclosure and Barring Service checks and Overseas Police Checks.

The School takes account of the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and the statutory guidance for regulated most recent activity. Checks are recorded on the school's Single Central Record detailing the range of checks carried out on staff, supply staff, others who work in regular contact with children, including volunteers and all members of the academy trust. The register will confirm whether a check was carried out and the date of such a check. The school undertakes the following checks in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education:

Identity checks to verify a candidate's identity:

- A DBS Enhanced Disclosure with barred list information for all staff engaged in a regulated activity (as defined in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).
- Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- Verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK including EU Nationals.
- Any staff who is appointed to carry out teaching work must have a Prohibition check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Teaching Regulation Agency's Employer Access Service is used to verify qualified teacher status (QTS).
- All new appointments to the school workforce who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks as appropriate. From 1 January 2020 this includes teachers in EEA member states as this will no longer be held on the TRA Employer Access Service.
- Section 128 regulatory check for Academy Governors and Staff in Management Positions.
- Enhanced DBS check for any serving Governor.
- Written vetting information is collected from the agency or third party organisation for all supply staff to confirm they have undergone the necessary checks and obtained the

- appropriate certificates.
- Supervised volunteers are not in a regulated activity, however an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check may be undertaken for these staff in appropriate circumstances.

The Headteacher, some School Governors and the Senior Leadership Team have undertaken the Safer Recruitment training. One of the above will be involved in all staff and volunteer appointments and arrangements (including, where appropriate, contracted/commissioned services). For full information on Safer Recruitment at Bentley Wood see the detailed policy 'Recruitment Policy', on the school website.

Safer working practice - All school staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child forms part of our School's compulsory training for all staff and volunteers. Click here for further information:
<https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20May%202019%20final.pdf>.

Managing allegations against staff and volunteers - Any allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, as described below, must be reported to the headteacher without delay, unless the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation - when the chair of governors must be informed.

Where a member of staff or volunteer may have:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/ relating to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

In addition, we ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*.

Our school will also ensure that any staff facing an allegation will be provided with support, including a named contact if they are suspended. We will work effectively with the Local Authority's Designated Officer to help ensure that the matter is dealt with as quickly, fairly and consistently as possible in the interests of all concerned.

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification. Confidentiality should not be promised and information is to be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

An immediate written record of the allegation should be made, including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, with brief details of what was said to have happened. This record should be signed and immediately passed on to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation is made against the Headteacher).

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will not investigate the matter but will consult the Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) for Managing Allegations via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Whilst recognising our duty to support staff, the welfare of our pupils remains our paramount consideration.

Our school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school. We recognise our legal duty to refer to the DBS and any other relevant professional body details of anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child. For further details on the management of allegations against staff, please see the Bentley Wood High School's Whistleblowing Policy.

8. Physical Intervention/ Positive Intervention:

The School will comply with the DfE's guidance on use of reasonable force staff may only use reasonable force, meaning no more force than is needed to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Headteachers and other authorised trained staff can use such force/ restraint as is reasonable in the circumstances to conduct a search for the following prohibited items: knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, cigarettes and tobacco, fireworks, pornographic images, mobile phones or any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage property.

Where the use of force is necessary, plans and reasonable adjustments should be made for disabled children and children with special educational needs.

Any use of force or restraint must be recorded and signed by a witness. The parent/ carer will be informed of the incident.

9. Whistle-blowing:

All staff and volunteers at our school should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by our senior leadership team.

All staff are to be made aware of their whistle-blowing responsibilities and promptly report any concerns in the interests of protecting children and staff from poor practice and or unsuitable behaviour. This includes the requirement to self-disclose any personal information which may impact on their suitability to work in an education setting.

Where internal reporting arrangements are viewed not to have been taken seriously or with sufficient rigour, any member of staff can raise concerns externally if the matter is not resolved by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors e.g. via the Local Authority's Designated Officer for Managing Allegations; the HSCB or the Government's Whistle-blowing report line: **0800 028 0285** or **help@nspcc.org.uk**

10. Supporting Vulnerable Children

We recognise that without appropriate intervention and support, abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on children which may last into adulthood.

Our school will support pupils through:

- Curricular opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;

- An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community;
- Liaison with other agencies which support the pupil such as Social Care and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Our school's behaviour policy will support vulnerable pupils in the school. Our staff will agree a consistent approach that focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of worth.

Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

(See Appendix G)

The school are aware of young people can be impacted through direct or indirect abuse, as young people can be a direct and indirect means of coercion and control

“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**. Abuse can be **direct or indirect** (e.g., through a child).

Children at potentially greater risk of harm

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

Children requiring mental health support: All staff will be made 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. However, staff are well placed to observe and identify children whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one.

Staff who have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to the DSL, Claire Bannon or a member of the Safeguarding Team.

The school will access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies. and has a comprehensive counselling support network, working with The Harrow Schools Counselling Partnership, Harrow Horizons, The Wish Centre and CAMHs to support our students and their families.

Looked After Children: The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/ or neglect. We will ensure that our staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe, including children who were previously looked after.

In particular, we will ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with Parental Responsibility. Our staff will obtain information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. Our Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (Debbie Ferrer) will obtain details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

The DSL for CLA will work with the virtual school head and appropriate professionals to promote the educational achievement and welfare of existing and previously Looked After Children. For further information see The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher and Promoting the Education of Looked After Children.

11. Online Safety

Our Online Safety Policy is set out in a separate document. We ensure that we have effective mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate. Online safety is included in our curriculum at all levels and information is also provided to parents/carers.

Before using the internet, school network or IT equipment staff and students sign an Acceptable Use Agreement which is designed to ensure that all adults working in school are aware of their individual responsibilities. The terms of this agreement should be followed at all times (see IT and Virtual school policy)

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

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

All staff are made aware of the school policy on Online Safety which sets our expectations relating to:

- Creating a safer online environment – including training requirements, filters and monitoring;
- Giving everyone the skills, knowledge and understanding to help children and young people stay safe on-line;
- Inspiring safe and responsible use and behaviour;
- Safe use of mobile phones both within school and on school trips/ outings;
- Safe use of camera equipment, including camera phones; and
- What steps to take if you have concerns and where to go for further help.

11a Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and

at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime

12. Peer on Peer Abuse

We, as a school community, have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Abuse or harassment should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. Children and young people may not always make a direct report and information may come from overheard conversations or observed behaviour changes.

The School are aware that even if there are no reported cases of peer-on-peer abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.

Different forms peer on peer abuse can take, such as:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- sexual abuse (which does not necessarily involve violence).
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (referred previously as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;

Bullying - Our school's policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed by the Curriculum and Achievement Committee every 2 years. This policy includes reference to all prejudice related bullying. We acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to considerations under child protection procedures. We recognise that children can also be vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers or they may be the perpetrator of such behaviour. In addition to cyberbullying, discriminatory bullying and abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.

We will always address such abuse seriously, involving partner agencies where required. We will remain alert to the possibility that a child or young person who has harmed another may well also be a victim. Staff should not dismiss some abusive sexual behaviour as 'normal' between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

12a Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

At Bentley Wood High School, we recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex. It can be complex and may occur online and offline. We will ensure that all victims are taken seriously and that appropriate action is taken to address the issue, including the provision of appropriate support. Sexual violence or sexual harassment, including 'upskirting' (a criminal offence) will not be passed off as 'banter' or just 'part of growing up'.

Upskirting: typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence) and sexual harassment (online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse);
- gender-based violence
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation-type violence and rituals (may also include an online element) .

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse

Sexual Violence Offences defined below under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (paraphrased for brevity):

- Rape: intentional penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person, using the penis, without consent
- Assault by penetration: intentional penetration of the vagina or anus of another person using a body part (other than the penis), or other object, without consent
- Sexual assault: intentionally touching another person sexually, without consent
- Sexual Harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual comments, 'jokes' or taunts; physical behaviour; or online sexual harassment.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behavior which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful or abusive (derived from Hackett 2014). It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behavior or sexualized behavior. HSB encompasses a range of behavior, which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It is harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as the people it is directed towards.

HSB includes:

- Sexist or homophobic name calling and bullying
- Sexual comments in person and on social media directed at students (such as 'slag', 'sket', 'hoe' 'slut')
- Rumours about another student's sexual activity
- Rating students with regard 'attractiveness' or 'masculinity'
- Controlling behaviour in relationships
- Pressure to send sexual photos
- Sexual imagery shared on social media without consent
- Inappropriate or unwanted touching or groping
- Pressure to perform sexual acts
- Sexual bullying, harassment and pressure

12b Sexting

The term 'sexting' is derived from texting and refers to the sending of sexually provocative material (including photos, videos and sexually explicit text) from modern communication devices or applications, such as mobile phones, tablets, email, social networking sites and instant messaging services – or 'youth-produced sexual imagery'.

Bentley Wood High School follows The UKCIS 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' guidance was published in December 2020

Legal Implications for Students

Sexting may breach laws that prohibit the creation, distribution or possession of child pornography regardless of whether all parties involved consent to the images being taken and shared, or whether the images are sent to other minors, even minors of the same age.

Sexting can constitute a criminal offence and sexual harassment. It can also be considered a form of sexual exploitation and cyberbullying.

This is especially the case where images are shared past the intended audience or when accompanied by nasty comments.

All staff members are required to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately upon becoming aware that sexting by a student is likely to have occurred. The allegation will first be investigated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the parents of all students involved will be contacted.

Staff members are not permitted to forward, copy or print any sexting images, however, if the nature of the sexting is deemed by the designated person to be of a serious nature, the Police will be contacted and the sexting will be reported to Children's Services - in accordance with the 2016 UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS now UKCIS) non-statutory guidance on managing incidents of sexting by under-18s.

12c Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse consists of the same patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour as domestic abuse.

These patterns might include sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse or psychological abuse.

Signs include:

- Physical signs injury/illness
- Truancy
- Falling grades
- Isolation from family and friends
- Frequent texts and calls from boyfriend/girlfriend
- Depression
- Self-harm (See Appendix 2)

In response to such a report our school will:

- reassure the victim that they will be taken seriously and they will be supported;
- respond in line with our safeguarding procedures outlined in sections 5 to 7 of this document;
- where a concern includes an online element, follow Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools and UKCCIS Sexting in schools and colleges. In general staff will not view or forward illegal images of a child (note that the guidance links in this paragraph give further advice where this is unavoidable); and
- if possible, manage any such reports with two members of staff present (preferably the DSL being one of them).

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, our DSL will make and record an immediate risk and needs assessment.

Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, including 'upskirting', the DSL will consider the need for a risk assessment on a case-by-case basis.

The risk and needs assessment will consider and keep under review:

- 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

Our DSL will engage with children's social care, the police and specialist services as required. Any risk assessments undertaken by the other agencies/ services will be used to inform our school's own risk assessment.

Important considerations:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of any harmful sexual behaviour;
- the ages and developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children e.g. age differential, disability or learning difficulty
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or staff; and
- other related, contextual issues e.g. in the community/ local environment
- if both the alleged perpetrator and victim are still attending the same school/ college, how best to keep them at a reasonable distance apart (including on transport).

Management of sexual violence/ harassment cases

Where appropriate, the management of such cases will be agreed in consultation with children's social care and/ or the police or other specialist service. There are four possible routes – **all** underpinned by the principle that such behaviour is **never acceptable and will not be tolerated**:

- (i) **Manage internally** - In some case of sexual harassment, e.g. one-off incidents, it might be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising our behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.
- (ii) **Early Help** – Providing early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.
- (iii) **Referrals to children's social care** – Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to children's social care, who will determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services. Referring to children's social care should not delay our school from taking immediate action to protect the victim and other children. However, we will ensure that any such actions do not jeopardise a statutory investigation.
- (iv) **Reporting to the Police** – Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the matter should be passed on to the police. If the alleged perpetrator is under ten (below the age of criminal responsibility), the principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare approach, rather than a criminal justice approach.

The school will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents/ carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

With all routes outlined above, it is vital that all concerns, decisions and reasons for decisions are recorded (written or electronic).

Bail conditions –The term 'Released Under Investigation' (RUI) will apply where circumstances do not warrant the application of bail to either re-attend on a particular date or to include conditions preventing activity or in some cases ensuring compliance with an administrative process.

In all cases, our school will work with children's social care and the police to manage any implications and to safeguard children. An important consideration will be to ensure that the victim can continue in their normal routine, including continuing to receive a suitable education.

Throughout any criminal process taking place, the police will help and support the school as much as they can – within the constraints of any legal restrictions.

The end of the criminal process – if a child is convicted or cautioned for a sexual offence and remains in school/ college, expectations regarding their future behaviour and any restrictions must be made clear.

Safeguarding and supporting the victim – victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately. They should be asked if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult to talk to about their needs and have choice about who this is. In response to any stress they may experience, flexible or alternative arrangements for their education may need to be considered. We will do everything we reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment to ensure that they continue to receive a suitable education.

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator – Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being subject of allegations and any associated negative reactions by their peers. We will respond proportionately, recognising that the alleged perpetrator may have unmet needs as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. These behaviours may be a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. We will seek advice as appropriate from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.

If the alleged perpetrator moves to another educational provision, our DSL will ensure that relevant staff at the new provision are made aware of any ongoing support needs and any potential risks to other children and the staff.

Sanctions may also be put in place if and when appropriate:

'Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary' (Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021)

The school has an effective programme of personal, social, health and economic education PCSHE and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) to help our students to understand safeguarding issues, how to raise a concern they may have about themselves, or a friend or peer; and learn to recognise and develop healthy and respectful relationships, avoiding stereotypes and promoting equality.

They are taught that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong.

Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as LGBT+, or are *perceived* by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND.

Students are aware of the NSPCC dedicated helpline for children and young people who have experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. Report Abuse on [0800 136 663](tel:0800136663) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Appendix 1:

Further Information – Safeguarding Children in Specific Circumstances

a) Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. There may also be community safety incidents within the vicinity of the school which can raise concerns amongst children and parents.

Opportunities for students to develop their confidence and abilities around keeping themselves are embedded into the school curriculum.

b) Children and the court system

Guidance is available for when children are required to give evidence in **criminal courts** 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds. Making arrangements for children via the **family courts** following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. The Ministry of Justice has launched useful online guidance Get help with child arrangements (also known as contact, access or custody).

c) Children with Disabilities or Special Educational Needs

Our school is committed to ensure that children with disabilities or special educational needs have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve the same outcomes as non-disabled children. We recognise that disabled children do however require additional action because they can experience greater vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairments.

These can include:

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

This understanding is incorporated into our staff training, so that we all remain vigilant to identifying the additional vulnerabilities for these children in our care and provide the appropriate level and type of pastoral support.

When such students are identified, additional support is given.

d) Children with a family member in prison

These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO (National Information Centre on Children of Offenders) provides information to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequence for those children.

e) Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see page 26 for more information), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing;
- misusing drugs or alcohol;
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late; and
- regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education.

f) Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Exploitation can also happen on-line.

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- having older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.

Our school will support the multi-agency activity to combat these crimes and help to divert and support any young pupils affected by CSE. We will follow the HSCB protocol for identifying and managing cases of CSE and promote the use of the HSCB's SAFEGUARD Identification Tool in our child protection training. Also see section on 'Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment' - page 21.

g) Gangs and youth violence

Schools are increasingly recognised as places where early warning signs can be spotted that younger children may be at risk of getting involved in gangs or youth violence. Crucial preventative work can be done at this stage to prevent negative behaviour from escalating and becoming entrenched. We recognise that even low levels of youth violence can have a disproportionate impact on a pupil or the wider school/ community environment. We will therefore, support children in developing safeguarding skills to prevent involvement in risky behaviours, and where serious concerns arise we will work collaboratively with our partner agencies to help prevent escalation of harm. For further information refer to government guidance on advice to schools on gangs and

youth violence. Local support for young people affected by gang association can be obtained via guidance on gangs and London Gang Exit programme the latter for 16-24 year olds.

County Lines: this is a geographically widespread form of criminal activity involving drug networks or gangs that groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural or seaside areas. Missing episodes can be an important identifying factor, where the victim may have been trafficked for these purposes. In close working relationship with our local MASH a referral to the **National Referral Mechanism** will be considered for any such concerns.

h) Domestic Abuse

Our school recognises the immediate and long term impact of domestic abuse on a child's development and emotional wellbeing. All staff will remain vigilant to identifying the signs so that early help and protective action can be instigated where appropriate. We endeavour to provide the child with a safe and caring environment at school to help mitigate the impact of home-life stresses.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

The statutory definition of domestic abuse ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Any notifications received from the police/ MASH of domestic abuse incidents, will be promptly reviewed by our DSL. This will enable our school to respond appropriately to the impact on the child/ young person and to share any additional information with MASH to assist in the overall identification and assessment of risk

i) Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

In our school we recognise that whilst there is not necessarily an intention to harm a girl through FGM, the practice has serious short and long term medical and psychological implications. We are committed to work with families, partner agencies to promote understanding and safeguard pupils who may be at risk of this practice.

We aim to work sensitively with community groups where this may be a cultural belief and practice, however we will act to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare where required and will fulfil our duties under the *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003* (as inserted by section 74 of the *Serious Crime Act 2015*). This places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years.

Information on when and how to make a report can be found in the government's [mandatory reporting procedure on FGM](#) guidance. Click here for [Factsheet](#) on the Serious Crime Act 2015: FGM amendments to the 2003 Act.

j) Forced Marriage

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. A lack of consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent e.g. if they have learning disabilities. There can also be links to so called 'Honour Based Violence'.

Our school recognises that it has an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage by educating pupils about the law and their rights and in identifying signs of risk. The Forced Marriage Unit has published [multi-agency statutory guidance](#) with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. The Unit can be contacted for advice or information on 020 7008 0151 or email: fmufco.gov.uk

k) Homelessness

Our staff will alert the DSL of families becoming or at risk of becoming homeless, so that the DSL can refer to housing services at the earliest opportunity. Indicators for the risk of homelessness can include debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Duties introduced under *The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017* shift focus to early intervention, for further information see: [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#).

l) Homestay - Children staying with host families

Pupils may as part of their learning experience, stay for short periods with a host family (homestay) e.g. as part of a foreign exchange visit or sports tour. We will ensure the suitability of the adults in their respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay. See 'Recruitment' in Bentley Wood Suite of HR Policies for further details on our specific duties.

m) So called 'honour-based' abuse

So called HBA encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/ or the community e.g. female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and breast ironing. All related concerns will be referred to our DSL, who as appropriate will activate safeguarding procedures.

n) Missing Education or Missing from Home and Care

Bentley Wood High School will fulfil its statutory duty in notifying the local authority when removing a pupil's name from the admission's register outside of the normal transition points and will also

liaise with the local authority in regards to a student who has been taken off role for elective home education. We will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority before deleting their name from the register. We will also notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name at a non-standard transition point.

When one of our pupils goes missing from home or care we will contribute to the police and local authority's efforts to identify and locate the child by completing the notification: [Grab Pack for a Missing Child](#). For further guidance see [Children missing Education](#).

o) Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation.

- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This 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 or people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Our school recognises that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is a part of our wider safeguarding duty to protect children from significant harm. Some young people may be more vulnerable to being groomed and this fact can be exploited by extremists. The internet and use of social media and risks within the home have become major factors in the radicalisation of young people and our school's Online Safety Policy and curriculum embeds understanding of these particular risks.

From 1st July 2015, specified authorities including all schools (and since 18th September 2015 all colleges) are subject to a duty under the *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015*, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is known as the Prevent duty. Paragraphs 57-76 of the [Revised Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales](#) (updated 1st April 2021) are specifically concerned with schools.

Our school will help to identify young people at risk and work with local partnership arrangements including the **Channel Programme** to help support and divert any young people from associated harm: Click here for further guidance [Channel Duty Guidance](#)

p) Private Fostering

We recognise the importance of identifying children in Private Fostering arrangements so that their needs can be fully assessed by the local authority. At Bentley Wood High School we will confirm the status of every pupil's care arrangements on admission (or when a pupil's care arrangements change) and notify the local authority of any known or suspected Private Fostering arrangement. We will support any subsequent assessment and remain alert to any additional needs that children placed away from their immediate families might face. Click here for information on what constitutes [private fostering](#) and here for details of [The Children's Act 1989: private fostering](#).

q) Substance Misuse

Pupils: We recognise the clear role our school has to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities. We will provide age appropriate information on drugs and alcohol and tackle problem behaviour, working with local partners to prevent drug or alcohol misuse. For further guidance refer to [DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for schools](#).

Parental Substance Misuse: Substance misuse (drugs or alcohol) may impact on parental capacity and can significantly exacerbate other concerns such as domestic violence or mental health issues. We will remain vigilant in identifying and supporting pupils and their families facing such issues, and work in collaboration with other agencies where necessary to prevent significant harm.

q) Mental Health

Pupils: Our school seeks to promote positive mental health in our pupils and to identify and address those with less severe problems at an early stage and build their resilience. We are also committed to identifying and supporting pupils with more severe needs and to help make appropriate referrals to specialist agencies such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) where necessary. For further information refer to government guidance on [mental health and behaviours](#) to identify and support pupils whose behaviour suggests they have unmet mental health needs.

Parental Mental Health: We recognise that some parents with mental health issues may experience difficulties at times with their parenting responsibilities. We are committed to supporting such families and will endeavour to identify those who would benefit from early help from local services and work with them to avoid any adverse impact on their children. For further guidance refer to [Think Child; Think Parent; Think Family: a guide to parental mental health and child welfare](#)

r) Trafficking and Modern-Day Slavery

Bentley Wood High School will remain alert for children trafficked into the country who may be registered at our school for a term or longer, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad. We will bear in mind that not all children who go missing from education have been victims of trafficking. For example, there may be instances of children from communities that move around – Gypsy, Roma, Traveller or migrant families – who collectively go missing from school. For further government guidance refer to [Safeguarding Children who may have been trafficked practice guidance](#).

The term Modern Slavery captures a whole range of types of exploitation, many of which occur together.

These include but are not limited to:

- Sexual exploitation – This includes but is not limited to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, forced prostitution and the abuse of children for the production of child abuse images/videos
- Domestic servitude – This involves a victim being forced to work in predominantly private households, usually performing domestic chores and childcare duties. Their freedom may be restricted and they may work long hours often for little or no pay, often sleeping where they work.
- Forced labour – Victims may be forced to work long hours for little or no pay in poor conditions under verbal or physical threats of violence to them or their families.
- Criminal exploitation – This can be understood as the exploitation of a person to commit a crime, such as pick-pocketing, shop-lifting, cannabis cultivation, drug trafficking and other similar activities

Other forms of exploitation – Organ removal; forced begging; forced benefit fraud; forced marriage and illegal adoption

Victims are forced to work though mental or physical threat., are owned and controlled by an employer though mental or physical abuse or threat of abuse., dehumanised and treated as a commodity with significant restrictions placed on their freedom

Under The Modern Slavery Act 2015 professionals (including the police, social workers, immigration and schools) are working together to identify and safeguard potential victims in line with the UK's legal obligations and should be familiar with the National Referral Mechanism, the official system of identification and assistance for potential victims of trafficking, and the rights of victims

s) Young carers

With so many adult responsibilities, young carers often miss out on opportunities that other children and young people have to play and learn. We in schools are uniquely placed to identify and respond to concerns and 'triggers' where children and young people may require additional help as carers. We will aim to respond early with our own pastoral support and where appropriate seeking help from local authority support services for young carers.

t) Children with a Social Worker

From September 2021 Virtual School Heads are strategic leaders for the cohort of children who have been assessed as being in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and currently have a social worker and those who have previously had a social worker. It covers all children who were assessed as needing a social worker at any time due to safeguarding and/or welfare reasons, which includes all those subject to a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection plan. This includes children aged from 0 up to 18 in all education settings.

The school's DSL and Designated Teacher for LAC will liaise with the Virtual Headteacher to access additional funding and support where appropriate.

Appendix 2 – Role Description for Designated Safeguarding Lead

Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees should appoint an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, to the role of designated safeguarding lead.

This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should 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, inter-agency meetings, contribute to the assessments of children – and/ or to support other staff to do so.

Any deputy should be trained to the same standard as the DSL, but the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL.

Managing referrals:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as required;
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or has 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.

Working with others:

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG));
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under *section 47* of the *Children Act 1989* and police investigations;
- liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college) 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 staff.
- to work with the headteacher and relevant colleagues in “taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school”.

Training:

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at

least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, 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 local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities 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 school or college's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the *Data Protection Act 2018* and the *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school/ college and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioner's;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the school or college 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 and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up-to-date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- 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; and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
- Will be supported in developing knowledge and skills to encourage a culture of listening and reducing barriers to disclosure.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

- ensure the school or college's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the school or college's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors 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 or college in this; and
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

Transfer of child protection files:

When a child transfers to another school or college, the DSL should inform the receiving school within five school days that a child protection/ safeguarding file exists. The receiving school should routinely ask the previous school if a child protection/ safeguarding file exists, for all transfers. The original child protection/ safeguarding file must be passed on either by hand or sent recorded delivery, separate from the child's main school file, within five school days from notification. Care must be taken to ensure confidentiality is maintained and the transfer process is as safe as possible. Parents should not be used as couriers for such files. See [Guidance on the transfer of a child protection file to another educational setting.](#)

Availability:

During term time the DSL or deputy should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the DSL or deputy would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools/ colleges, working with the DSL to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable.

It is a matter for individual schools/ colleges and the DSL to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/ out of term activities.

Appendix 3:

Types of abuse and neglect

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

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

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

may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

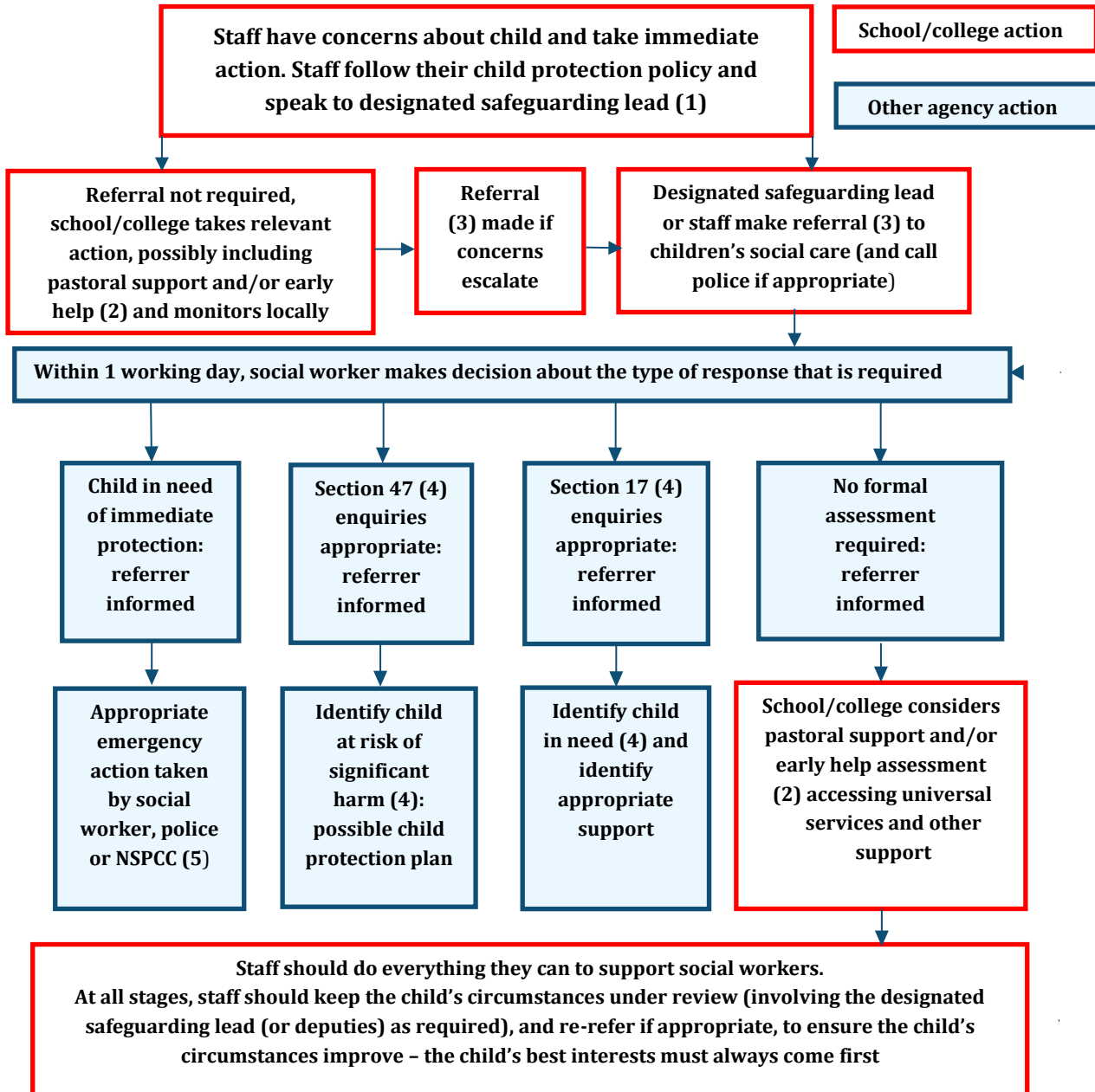
Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may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

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

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

Appendix 4:

Actions where there are concerns about a child



1. In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance.
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from coordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
3. Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
4. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
5. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Appendix 5

Low-level concerns

The School strives to embed a culture of openness and transparency in which the School's values and expected behaviour, as set out in the Code of Conduct for Staff, are constantly reinforced by all staff.

All staff should feel enabled to share any concerns about their own or another member of staff's behaviour, with the appropriate member of staff as set out below.

The distinction between an allegation and a low-level concern

The term 'allegation' (in this context) means that it is alleged that an adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (this includes behaviour that may have happened outside of School that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children)

A low-level concern is any concern about an adult's behaviour towards a child that does not meet the allegation threshold set out above, or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with the Code of Conduct for Staff, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to, being over friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their personal devices, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language etc.

Staff are not expected to determine whether their concern is a low-level concern, serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO, or meets the threshold of an allegation. Once staff share what they believe to be a low-level concern, that determination will be made by the Headteacher.

How to share low-level concerns

It is important that low-level concerns are shared with the Headteacher as soon as reasonably possible and, in any event, within 24 hours of becoming aware of the concern and relevant incident(s).

Concerns can be shared verbally in the first instance, or in writing. The context in which the low-level concern arose and details which are chronological, precise and accurate as possible of the concern and relevant incident(s) must be provided.

Where details of the low-level concern is provided verbally, the Headteacher will make an appropriate record of the conversation, either contemporaneously or immediately following the discussion. The Headteacher will check the accuracy of the record with the member of staff who raised the concern.

Low-level concerns will be treated in confidence as far as possible, but the School may in certain circumstances be subject to legal reporting requirements or other legal obligations to share information with appropriate persons, including legal claims and formal investigations.

Self-reporting

Staff who find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, have behaved in a manner which on reflection they consider falls below the standard set out in the Code of Conduct for Staff are encouraged to self-report. Self-reporting can be positive for a number of reasons: it is self-protective in that it enables a potentially difficult issue to be addressed at the earliest opportunity; it demonstrates awareness of the expected behavioural standards and self-awareness of the individual's own actions or how they could be perceived; and is an important means of maintaining a culture where all staff aspire to the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.

Recording and reviewing low-level concerns

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing by the Headteacher. The record will include details of the context in which the concern arose and the action taken. The name of the member of staff sharing the concern will be noted however, where the member of staff wishes to remain anonymous this will be respected as far as possible.

Records will be reviewed at regular intervals to identify potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour.

Retention of records

Records will be kept confidential, held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

When the member of staff leaves and/or takes up new employment the records will be reviewed to ensure it still has value either as a safeguarding measure or because of its possible relevance to future claims and is therefore necessary to retain, or whether it can be securely destroyed.

References

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, e.g., misconduct or poor performance. Low-level concerns which relate exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) will not be referred to in a reference. Where a low-level concern has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated will be included in a reference

Reporting incidents of alleged sexual violence and sexual harassment

Context:

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) **and are never acceptable.**

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Schools should be aware of, and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns, including those outside the school, and or online.

We need to be clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

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.

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

What is sexual violence?

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.

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.

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. (Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is sexual harassment?

This list is not exhaustive but could 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 crosses 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;
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. As set out in UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (which provides detailed advice for schools) taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence;
 - sharing of unwanted explicit content;
 - upskirting (is a criminal offence);
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Legal responsibilities and equality policies

Schools and colleges are required to comply with relevant requirements as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

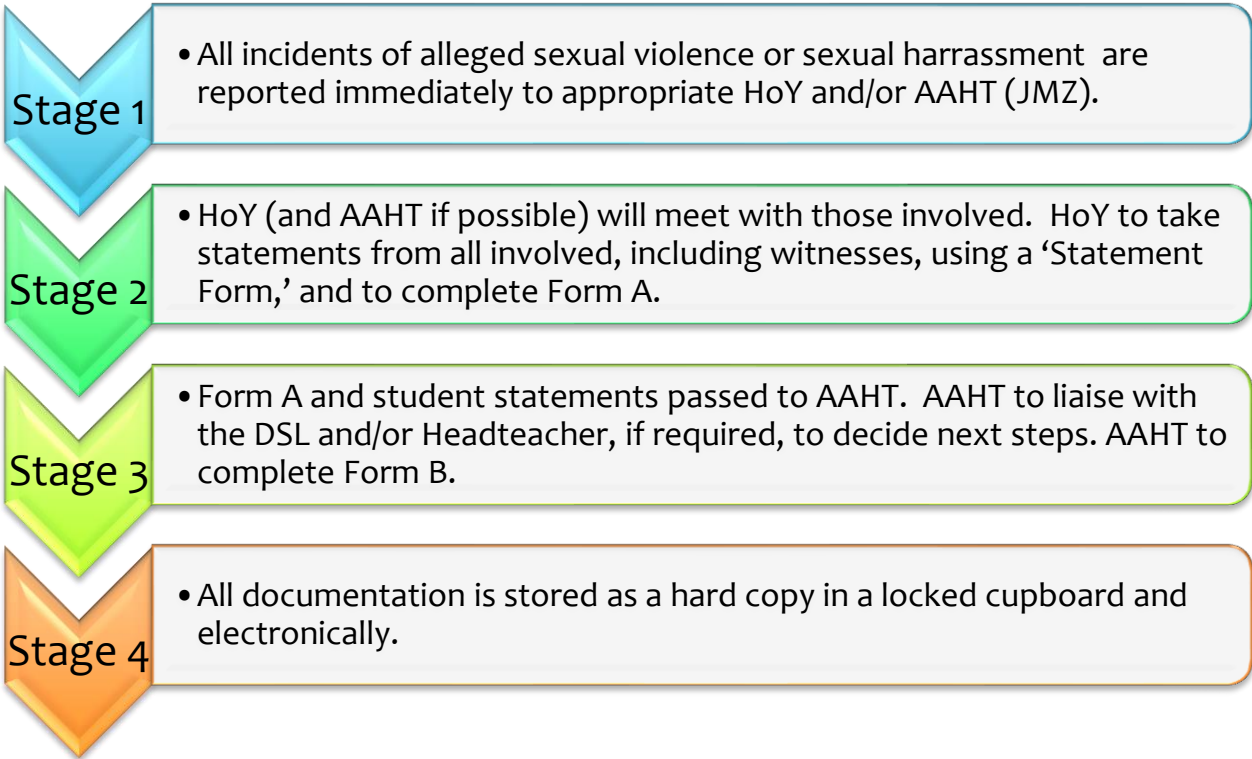
Schools also need to be aware of our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998. Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal requirement. Under the PSED, schools and colleges that are public bodies have a general duty to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between different groups and to foster good relations between different groups. The duty applies to all protected characteristics.

Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

There are four likely scenarios for schools and colleges to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

1. Manage internally
2. Early help
3. Referrals to children’s social care
4. Reporting to the police

Reporting process for sexual violence or sexual harassment



Documentation to be completed:

1. Student/ staff statements
2. Form A
3. Form B

Incident of sexual harassment: Form A

To be completed by HoY following discussion with AAHT (JMZ)

Incident reported by		Role in school	
Incident reported to		Role in school	
Date of incident		Date of report	
Nature of incident	Sexual violence Sexual harassment		

Section 1: Details of those involved in the incident (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

<u>Victim:</u>	<u>Alleged Perpetrator:</u>	<u>Alleged Perpetrator:</u>
If student at school please complete the following: Year group: Form group:	If student at school please complete the following: Year group: Form group:	If person outside school please provide details:

Section 2: Summary of the incident

Incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment: Form B

To be completed by AAHT following meetings with those involved

Section 1:

Location of incident:

What type of incident occurred? Please highlight.

Sexual violence	Sexual harassment
Rape	Sexual comments
Assault by penetration	Sexual jokes or taunting
Sexual assault	Physical behaviour
Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent	Online sexual harassment

Section 2:Action taken and support offered*To be completed following consultation with the DSL and Head Teacher.*

What action(s) was / were taken to deal with the incident? Please highlight.

Warning to the perpetrator
Discussion with the victim's parent(s) / guardian / carer
Discussion with the perpetrator
Discussion with the perpetrator's parent(s) / guardian / carer
Sanction in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
Mediation
Mentoring or Counselling
Early help
Curriculum change or addition
Referral to children's social care
Reporting to the police
Exclusion (internal) and duration
Exclusion (external) and duration
Managed move
Permanent exclusion
Referral to another body
Other (please specify)