

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

At Sheiling School Thornbury we are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and secure environment for pupils, young people, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors and to promoting a climate where children, young people and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

Our policy draws on all relevant legislation and statutory guidance ([see Appendix 1.2 for further details](#)) including:

- [The Children Act \(1989 and 2004 amendment\)](#);
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges \(2023\)](#);
- [What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused- Advice for Practitioners](#)
- [The Prevent Duty \(2016\)](#);
- [The four guiding principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#); and
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#).

Other school policies and procedures which should be read alongside this policy are listed in [Appendix 1.0](#). These policies can be accessed via the school website <http://www.sheilingschool.org.uk/about-us/policies-procedures/>

We believe that our school provides a safe, positive and caring environment in which children and young people can grow in their social, physical and moral development. We recognise the vital contribution our school can make in safeguarding children and young people from harm and we intend to carry out our responsibilities actively and enthusiastically in liaison with all other concerned parties.

A copy of this policy is available on request to parents/primary guardians/ carers and is also accessible via the school website ([See above link](#)).

Concerned parents/primary guardians/carers may also contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL(s) in their absence.

Throughout this policy ‘pupils’, ‘pupil’, ‘children’, ‘child’, ‘young person’ or ‘young people’ refer to anyone under the age of 18 years old.

We recognise the need for all to be alert to the risks posed by those who may wish to harm children and young people in school or travelling to and from school and their homes, and to maintain an attitude that “**it could happen here**” where safeguarding is concerned ([Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023](#)).

The four main elements to this policy are:

- Striving to **prevent** harm through the development of a positive school ethos, a safe school environment, a full curriculum and through the offer of pastoral support to pupils and young people and their families;
- The school child protection **infrastructure and procedures** for identifying and reporting cases (or suspected cases) of abuse or other child protection/safeguarding concerns;
- **Support** for pupils or young people who may have suffered significant harm, and their families; and
- **Staff recruitment, management and support systems** which protect children and young people.

2. AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To support the development of the whole child as an individual by promoting security, confidence and independence;
- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare
- To raise awareness of all staff and governors as to their statutory responsibilities in safeguarding- including identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse as set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) ;
- To ensure that staff concerned with children and young people are aware of their role and responsibility in safeguarding these pupils and young people as set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) ;
- To ensure that all staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues
- To use a clear system of monitoring children and young people who are known to be or considered to be at risk of harm;
- To ensure that there is good, appropriate and effective communication between all members of staff;
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially Social Care, Health and Avon and Somerset Police;
- To ensure all adults working within the school with access to children and young people undergo all relevant checks e.g. enhanced DBS check as set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) ; and
- To ensure all staff are clear about the 'Paramountcy Principle'; that the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

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

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of racism, sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment.

3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL in Sheiling School Thornbury is:

[Noah Black Head of Safeguarding](#)

In his absence, these matters will be dealt with by the Deputy DSL(s):

[Dean Frances Hawksley Head Teacher](#)

[Fergus Bright Deputy Head Teacher](#)

[Syl Edgeley Family Liaison & Staff Support Lead](#)

[Victoria Welsh Head of Care](#)

policies are in place and are followed with regard to safeguarding and child protection issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour

The DSL and deputies will also:

- Keep the Headteacher/Head of Care and Principal informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

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

3.2 Designated Governors

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding at Sheiling school is:

[Anthony Nowlan](#)

The responsibilities of governing bodies, proprietors and management committees are outlined in part two of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

3.3 Key Definitions

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

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

Child Protection is:

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect children and young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm ([see Appendix 1.1 for further details](#)).

3.4 Equality statement

Some children and young people have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children and young people with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and young people's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children and young people have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children and young people who:

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

3.5 Preventing Harm

We recognise that developing the necessary qualities (e.g. emotional resilience, self-confidence) within both the children and young people themselves and the school as a whole can help to prevent harm.

The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children and young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;

- Ensure children and young people know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip children and young people with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and ensure that they know who to turn to for help; these are mainly embedded throughout the formal and informal school curriculum and include:
 - E-safety
 - Healthy relationships
 - Consent
 - Recognising and dealing with peer pressure
 - Safe and unsafe touch
 - Skills to express their views and complain purposefully
 - How to assess risk and make choices to keep themselves safe
 - Independent living / self-care skills
- Opportunities to teach these areas are provided through structured programmes of work including Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and citizenship, ICT and are also reflected in the pupil and young peoples' day to day experiences through the mission and values of the school. All staff are expected to actively promote fundamental British values through the formal and informal curriculum. And;
- Include in the curriculum materials which will help children and young people develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to the care of children and young people.

3.6 Early Help

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) states that “All staff should be prepared to identify children and young people who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child [or young person’s] life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years” (p.7). Staff should discuss early help requirements with the DSL (or a deputy). We follow the South Gloucestershire early help process which includes the use of the [Early Help Assessment & Plan \(EHAP\)](#). It may be appropriate for a member of school staff to initiate an EHAP and take on the role of Lead Professional, or become a member of a Team around the Child/Family (TAC/F) as part of the EHAP process. If this is the case, then the staff member will be supported by the DSL, for example, by being given time to write the EHAP and attend TAC/F meetings. All staff should have an understanding of the EHAP process and how they can contribute to it as and when appropriate.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

The procedures for safeguarding children and young people will be in line with the [South West Child Protection Procedures](#) and those accessed on the South Gloucestershire Children’s Partnership (SGCP) website - [SGCP](#). These are consistent with the procedures of the three local authority safeguarding partners ([see Appendix 1.3 for further details](#)). Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

4.1 School Safeguarding Infrastructure

As a whole school we will ensure that:

- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is trained to an advanced level by attending Advanced Inter-agency Child Protection training and maintained by attending CP Update training every 2 years thereafter. The DSL is a member of the School’s Senior Leadership Team;

- We have at least one deputy DSL who will meet the same training requirements as the DSL outlined above;
- Every member of staff and every governor knows and understands:
 - the name of the DSL, Deputy DSL(s) and Designated Governors and their roles around safeguarding and child protection;
 - that they have an individual responsibility for acting on any concerns about a child's welfare immediately by following this policy and speaking to the DSL (or a deputy); and
 - their responsibilities as outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) (*see Appendix 2.1- 2.3 for further details*)
- All staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) on induction;
- All staff have read and understood part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023](#) and review this guidance at least annually.
- All staff will sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents/primary carers. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children and young people to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online).
- The school provision has ICT filtering and monitoring processes in place on its ICT network that prevents harmful or inappropriate online content from being accessed whilst enabling the monitoring of online activity that has been blocked by the ICT filter (*see Online Safety policy for further details*).
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns
- All members of staff receive whole setting Child Protection training every 3 years which covers:
 - their personal responsibilities in relation to child protection;
 - school child protection procedures;
 - identifying signs of abuse/suspected abuse;
 - how to support a child, young person or adult who discloses abuse;
 - current national and local issues in safeguarding and child protection;
 - whistleblowing and the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); and
 - relevant legislation related to child protection
- All matters relating to child protection are confidential. Information about a child or young person will only be disclosed to members of staff on a need to know basis, in line with [Information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018](#) (*see Appendix 2.1- 2.3 for further details*);
- All staff are aware of their professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and young people;
- All staff are aware that they should never promise a child or young person that they can keep secrets for them;
- All staff are aware that they need to obtain support and help for the children and young people should it be necessary;

- All members of staff recognise that statistically children and young people with SEN and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse; staff supporting children and young people with profound and multiple disabilities, cerebral palsy, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour difficulties will be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse ([see Appendix 1.1 for further details](#));
- All members of staff recognise the importance of children being safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material
- Parents/primary guardians/ carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff with regard to child protection and understand the role staff play in child protection and that good communication between parents/primary guardians/ carers and the school is vital to this;
- All new members of staff are given access to the relevant safeguarding policies and procedures (including this child protection policy) during their induction to the school. Staff need to sign the relevant form to confirm that they have read and that they have understood the content of the policies and procedures ([see Appendix 2.1- 2.3 for further details](#));
- All supply and temporary staff are given a copy of the school procedures flowchart and the names of the DSL, Deputy DSL(s) and Chair of Governors;
- Entry to school premises is monitored and controlled by gates, doors and the vigilance of staff and that authorised visitors to the school will be logged into and out of the premises;
- Visitors, when arriving at reception, will receive a leaflet with a summary of the school's safeguarding procedures and will be asked to read it. Their signing in will be an acknowledgement that they understand the purpose of the procedures; and
- That parents and carers are allowed on school site during certain times of the day (during pick-up and drop-off) and that this is with the permission of the school. Should there be any concerns raised about the conduct of parents/carers or visitors they will be asked to leave and further action taken to ensure the safety of children and young people.

4.2 Reporting Concerns

The [concern reporting procedure \(see Appendix 2.5\)](#) is a summary flow chart of all action relating to the school's child protection and safeguarding and should be followed in each and every case.

It is important that all communication is given in writing to the DSL as soon as possible as an official signed and dated record.

Concerns of a safeguarding or serious nature are reported externally to local authorities as well as other external reporting bodies ([see Appendix 2.1 for further details](#)).

4.3 Key Responsibilities of the DSL

The DSL is responsible for:

- Taking the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) within our school, as set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023](#). This responsibility should not be delegated.
- Ensuring that he/she works closely with the deputy DSL(s) so that they can act effectively in the absence of the DSL;

- Ensuring that the relevant safeguarding and child protection information is shared with staff on induction – part one of [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023](#) (and a copy of Annex B to all staff who work directly with children) our school’s child protection policy, Promoting Positive Behaviour policy, staff Code of Conduct), the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies);
- Adhering to SGCP procedures by referring children and young people to the Access and Response Team (ART) on [01454 866000](tel:01454 866000) or relevant Multi- agency safeguarding hub (MASH) of the placing local authority- if there are concerns about their safety or well-being;
- Ensuring that in the case of a referral to ART/ MASH (or any social care ‘front door’ in other Local Authorities) to, the parents/carers are informed prior to the referral being made, unless doing so would put the child or young person at risk of further harm;
- Ensuring that written records are kept about any child or young person about whom there are concerns of possible abuse or neglect. Abuse will be defined in terms of: Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse, (including witnessing or hearing domestic abuse) and Neglect ([see Appendix 1.1 for further details](#));
- Storing any paper records confidentially in a secure locked cabinet (See Section 9 for more information);
- Checking the attendance of children and young people subject to a child protection plan notifying the relevant social care team if:
 - a pupil or young person subject to a child protection plan is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently
 - there is an unexplained absence of a pupil or young person subject to a child protection plan of more than a day from school (or one day following a weekend) without contact and good reason;
- Attendance at Initial Child Protection Case Conferences, Core Groups and Child Protection Review Conferences;
- Submitting written reports to Social Care on request within the agreed time limits;
- Liaising with other agencies to safeguard children and young people;
- Notifying parents/primary guardians/ carers as soon as possible if a child or young person sustains an injury or are affected by an incident whilst they are the responsibility of the school;
- Ensuring that a paper copy of all child protection records, or an electronic copy is securely sent/forwarded to a child or young person’s new school following a transfer;
- Retain copies of all child protection files including those for children or young people no longer on roll until the child or young person reaches 25 years of age;
- Ensuring that staff are appropriately trained and given regular safeguarding updates; and
- Ensuring that the Single Central Record is maintained as an up to date and accurate record ([see Appendix 2.0 for further details](#)).

N.B. Further information about the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in Annex C of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

5. SUPPORTING PUPILS & YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SCHOOL

We recognise that when children and young people are the victims of abuse or are witnessing abuse, for example, domestic abuse, their self-esteem and sense of self-worth will be adversely affected. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children and young people at risk.

In addition, we recognise that all of our pupils and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Pupils and young people being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils and young people
- The potential for pupils and young people with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and sexual harassment, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Consequently, when at school pupils may become challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. All staff are therefore encouraged to consider the underlying causes for a child or young person's behaviour – as all behaviour is communication.

We understand that our role is to help children and young people combat the feelings of helplessness and self-blame they may experience in these situations. We can do this by maintaining a positive school ethos where children and young people feel valued, safe and secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.

5.1 School Support to Pupils and Young People through Difficulties

The school will endeavour to support pupils and young people with difficulties through:

- Continued monitoring of their development coordinated by the DSL in collaboration with other staff working directly with those children and young people;
- Keeping records and notifying ART/MASH as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern;
- Continued close collaboration with parents/ primary guardians, carers and involved professionals;
- Liaison with a wide range of appropriate and trustworthy statutory and voluntary agencies who may be able to support the child or young person;
- The school's [Promoting Positive Behaviour in School policy](#), which outlines a consistent approach focusing on the behaviour or the offence committed by the child or young person but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth (for example, supporting those who are accused of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment); and
- Providing appropriate pastoral support and care.

6. SUPPORTING STAFF IN THE SCHOOL

We recognise that staff who have been involved with a child or young person who has been abused or appears at risk of harm, may find the situation very stressful and upsetting. Support will be given to staff by providing an opportunity to talk about their anxieties and reflect on possible outcomes with a designated member of staff and to seek further external support as appropriate.

6.1 Allegations against Staff

- If you have concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff (including an agency worker, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made against, a member of staff, volunteer or Governor, the Safeguarding Team members as well as the Principal must be informed immediately;
- Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the DSL or Deputy DSL's, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO). The [LADO for South Gloucestershire](#) is: **Tina Wilson**
- Where the allegation is against, or the concern is about the School Principal, the Chair of Governors must be informed immediately;
- If the Chair of Governors cannot be contacted, the LADO must be informed immediately;
- If the response (from either the School Principal or the Chair of Governors) to a report of an allegation or concern is felt to be unsatisfactory e.g. minimising, then the LADO must be informed immediately.
- Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff ([See Appendix 2.4 for further details](#))
- Other complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaint policy and procedures.

6.2 Whistle-Blowing

We recognise that children and young people cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. A Whistleblowing Policy is in place for this purpose.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk

6.3. Staff Code of Conduct

All staff (paid and voluntary) and governors are expected to adhere to the school's Code of Conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and young people and their families. Children and young people will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside those detailed in the school's [Promoting Positive Behaviour in School policy](#).

Whilst it would be unrealistic to prohibit all physical contact between adults, children and young people, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism and misrepresentation. If it becomes necessary to hold a pupil physically for their own or others' safety, this should be in line with the school's policy for physical intervention ([Promoting Positive Behaviour in School policy](#)), a record will be made of the incident and the Head of Safeguarding informed on the same day. ([See Appendix 2.3 for further details](#))

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils and young people. All rooms which are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils and young people should have clear glass panels in the doors or the doors will be left open.

School staff should also be alert to the possible risks which might arise from contact with pupils and young people and parents/carers outside the school including the use of social media. Please refer to the Online Safety Policy, in addition to the Staff Code of Conduct.

[Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2015](#)

7. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Some of the specific safeguarding issues faced by children and young people are outlined below. Annex B of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) contains additional information about these and other specific safeguarding issues – children and the court system, children missing from education, children with family members in prison, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation: county lines, domestic abuse, homelessness, so-called ‘honour-based’ violence and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

7.1 Child on Child Abuse and sexual violence/ sexual harassment

We believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children and young people should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils or peers. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or dismissed as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’ or ‘part of growing up’, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children and young people. All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, regardless of gender of the alleged perpetrator(s) and alleged victim(s).

We recognise that some pupils and young people will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others, however in most instances, the conduct of pupils and young people towards each other will be covered by the school’s Promoting Positive Behaviour policy. However, some allegations might be of such a serious nature that they become safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation; however, we are aware that the abuse may take any form, including the use of technology.

Definition

- The definition for domestic abuse (Home Office 2013) relates to young people aged 16 and 17 who experience physical, emotional, sexual and/or financial abuse, and coercive control, in their intimate relationships;
- The definition for child sexual exploitation (DfE 2017) includes all children and young people under the age of 18 who are sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by a person of any age – including another child and/or young person;
- The definition for young people who display harmful sexual behaviour refers to any young person, under the age of 18, who engage in “sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development” (Rich, 2011). Children and young people can also engage in harmful sexual behaviour online or through the use of technology e.g. grooming, exposing others to extreme/illegal pornography, sexual images and/or chat (Belton and Hollis, 2016);
- Serious youth violence is defined with reference to offences (as opposed to relationships/contexts) such as violence against the person, sexual offences, robbery or gun or knife crime (Metropolitan Police, 2016)

The safeguarding implications of sexual activity between young people

The intervention of child protection agencies in situations involving sexual activity between children and young people can require professional judgments. Some situations are statutorily clear – for example, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. But it will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving children and young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. In our society generally the age at which children and young people become sexually active has steadily dropped. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between children and young people of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), and sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation

Prevention

At our school we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils and young people by:

- Providing PHSE as part of the curriculum, which will help pupils and young people develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe;
- Having effective systems within our school for pupils and young people to be able to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be looked into and addressed;
- Being aware of and challenging inappropriate language used by pupils and young people e.g. terms such as describing something as 'gay' can have a lasting impact on the self-esteem of those pupils and young people who may be struggling with or confused about their sexual identity;
- Liaising and working with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments for pupils and young people that are identified as posing a potential risk to other pupils and young people; and
- Liaising with specialists to deliver appropriate targeted work to pupils and young people identified as being at potential risk e.g. protective behaviours work.

Allegations against Other Pupils and Young People (Safeguarding issues)

Allegations of abuse or that are a safeguarding concern maybe made against other pupils and young people within our setting. These may include allegations of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

Safeguarding concerns or reports of abuse in any form may be made against pupils and young people in our setting

It may also be considered a safeguarding issue if the allegation:

- Is being made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger or more vulnerable pupil;
- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offense;
- Puts other pupils and young people in the school at risk, or raises the risk factor for others;
- Indicates that other pupils and young people may have been harmed or be at risk of harm; and
- Includes bullying (under the definition of emotional abuse) or intimidation.

Specific safeguarding issues against another pupil may include:

- Physical abuse:
 - Pre-planned violence
 - Physical altercations
 - Hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or some other form of physical harm
 - Forcing others to carry out violence
 - Forcing others to use drugs, alcohol or other substances
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Emotional abuse:
 - Bullying
 - Threats and intimidation
 - Blackmail/extortion
- Sexual abuse & sexual harassment:
 - Sexual violence e.g. rape, assault by penetration
 - Sexual harassment e.g. sexual comments, sexual taunting, sexualised online bullying
 - Indecent exposure
 - Indecent touching
 - Showing pornography to others

- Forcing others to create/share/download indecent images
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Sexting (see 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges', 2016), also known as youth produced sexual imagery); also ([see Appendix 1.4 for further details](#))
- Sexual exploitation
 - Encouraging/enticing other pupils and young people to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour
 - Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts
 - Sharing images through social media

Procedure

- When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, which is of a safeguarding nature it should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible (or deputy if the DSL is unavailable);
- A factual record must be kept (as per normal safeguarding child protection procedures) and updated with all actions and outcomes;
- The incident should not be investigated at this time;
- The DSL (or deputy) will contact the Access and Response Team (ART) or local authority MASH team to discuss the case, and make a formal referral where appropriate;
- If the allegation indicates that a potential crime has taken place, ART or local authority MASH team will refer the case to the police;
- Parents/ Primary guardians/ carers of both the alleged victim and the pupil the allegation is against should be informed; this should be discussed during consultation with ART/MASH;
- A risk assessment will be considered at this time to protect all parties involved;
- It may be appropriate, for a fixed period of time, to exclude the pupil against whom the allegation has been made in line with our school's Promoting Positive Behaviour policy and procedures;
- Police and social care will lead any investigation, however where neither police nor social care thresholds are met, our school will then undertake a thorough investigation following our schools policies and procedures;
- A risk assessment should be considered along with an appropriate supervision plan;
- Support should be given to all pupils and young people involved (including those against whom the allegation has been made), and they should be in attendance at all relevant meetings and sign and agree to the plan that is set; and
- The plan should be monitored and review dates set.

Ongoing support

- Careful consideration needs to be given as to what language is used to describe the 'victim(s)' and alleged 'perpetrator(s)' ([see Appendix 1.1 for further details](#));
- A child or young person abusing another child or young person may be indicative of that child/ young person being a victim of abuse themselves, or other issues that require an appropriate and co-ordinated response (e.g. carrying out an early help assessment). It is important to remember that, as a child/ young person, any alleged perpetrator is entitled to, deserving of, and should be provided with, the appropriate level of support to help them understand and overcome the reasons for their behaviour and help protect other children and young people by limiting the likelihood of them abusing again;
- Support should be offered on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the pupils and young people involved, parents/ primary guardians/carers and any relevant agencies;

- The wishes and feelings of those involved should be taken into account e.g. the victim should be asked if there is a trusted adult within the school environment they wish to talk to as an ongoing source of support, or the victim may express a need to leave a classroom which will need to be supported and facilitated.

If allegations are made directly to other agencies

In some circumstances, parents/primary guardians/ carers or the alleged victim(s) will disclose to other settings or agencies. In these cases (if not police or social care) these agencies should make referrals to ART/MASH or the police.

ART/MASH or the police should liaise directly with the DSL for the school to inform them of the situation.

All professionals involved can support with the risk assessment and management of such allegations.

Police Action and Responsibility

Avon and Somerset Police will make an assessment on a case-by-case basis as to the legality, proportionality and necessity to share information with partner agencies, including schools.

Where a report is made concerning a school-age child or a young person, and the school/educational establishment is already involved, the police should keep the DSL for that setting updated with developments in the case and police officer/staff dealing with the matter. In South Gloucestershire, schools receive domestic abuse reports where children and young people are involved in those cases where the police identify a safeguarding need.

Where a report is made concerning a school-age child or a young person and the school/educational establishment is not already involved, the police must always give active consideration to sharing relevant information with the setting. This will ensure that the setting can take necessary measures to ensure the safety of the children/ young people involved and others they may come into contact with. The decision on the appropriate measures to take should be made by the setting with support from the police as necessary.

In the case of police or court bail conditions for safeguarding cases, the police must notify the setting of the conditions which are relevant to keep the child/ young person and others safe in the setting.

If a report indicates a safeguarding concern regarding a child or a risk they may pose to others, the presumption is the report will be shared with those who need to know to help keep children and young people safe. A review strategy meeting may be the most appropriate way of communicating and agreeing a suitable course of action.

7.2 The Prevent Duty

In order for schools to fulfil the Prevent Duty, it is essential that staff are able to identify children and young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation as part of our safeguarding duties. The statutory guidance makes clear that schools are expected to assess the risk of children and young people being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children and young people who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

The general risks affecting children and young people may vary from area to area, and according to their age. Schools are in an important position to identify risks within a given local context.

It is important that schools understand these risks so that they can respond in an appropriate and proportionate way. At the same time schools should be aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, as terrorist organisations may and do seek to radicalise children and young people through the use of social media and the internet.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children and young people's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children and young people at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views.

School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children and young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately.

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent Duty does not require teachers to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but as with any other safeguarding risk, they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

The safeguarding procedures outlined above need to be followed in exactly the same way should staff have a concern about potential radicalisation or undue influences ([see Appendix 1.4 for further details](#)).

7.3 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. Perpetrators of CSE are found in rural as well as urban areas and are not restricted to particular ethnic groups. It is important that staff are aware of the risk factors and alert the DSL if there are concerns.

Key indicators of children and young people being sexually exploited can include:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- Drug and alcohol misuse; and
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Practitioners should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation may not recognise themselves as such but they should still be regarded as victims. ([see Appendix 1.4 for further details](#)).

7.4 Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable young people

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and VCS (voluntary and community sector) organisations. The UK Government defines county lines as:

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

Child criminal exploitation is used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as:

Child Criminal Exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines however, and includes for instance children and young people forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

Key indicators of children and young people being criminally exploited can include:

- persistently going missing from school or home and / or being found out-of-area;
- unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
- excessive receipt of texts / phone calls and/or having multiple handsets
- relationships with controlling / older individuals or groups
- leaving home / care without explanation
- suspicion of physical assault / unexplained injuries
- parental concerns
- carrying weapons
- significant decline in school results / performance
- gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Practitioners should also be aware that many children and young people who are victims of criminal exploitation may not recognise themselves as such but they should still be regarded as victims. ([see Appendix 1.4 for further details](#)).

7.5 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the Mandatory Reporting Duty

As all staff should be vigilant to the indicators of child sexual exploitation - the same is relevant for FGM.

The definition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)¹ is as follows:

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there is no medical reason for this to be done.

Section 5B of the 2003 FGM Act introduced a mandatory duty which requires teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her;
- Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth ([see Appendix 1.4 for further details](#))

Further information about making a report to the police can be found in the [FGM Mandatory Reporting Procedures](#). The DSL must be kept notified of any reports of alleged/ abuse, concerns and calls made to the police. Recordings of alleged abuse/concerns and any subsequent conversations must be logged and given to the DSL as with any other safeguarding/child protection issue.

South Gloucestershire Contact Information

Access and Response Team (ART)

01454 866000

accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – out of hours/weekends

01454 615165

Compass Team/ Early Help Assessment & Planning (EHAP)

Compass@southglos.gov.uk

Tina Wilson

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

01454 868508

LADO@southglos.gov.uk

7.6 Child/ Youth Mental Health & Safeguarding

Due to the profile of need of our pupils, all staff are acutely aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children and young people day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Some staff are trained as Youth/Mental Health First Aiders whilst others receive mental health awareness training.
- Where children and young people have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic [adverse childhood experiences](#), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is therefore key that staff have awareness of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child or young person that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken, in accordance with the child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputies.
- The DoF has published advice and guidance on [Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#), and also [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#).
- In addition, Public Health England (PHE) has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance [Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#). PHE resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol.

8. NOTIFYING PARENTS/ PRIMARY GUARDIANS/CARERS

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child or young person with the child or young person's parents/ primary guardians or carers. The DSL or deputy DSL's will typically do this in the event of a possible safeguarding concern or a report of alleged abuse.

Other staff will only talk to parents/primary guardians/carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL or deputy DSL's.

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

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children or young people, we will normally notify the parents/ primary guardians/ carer of all the children and/ or young people involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

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

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

9. RECORD KEEPING

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A chronology of any action(s) taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for any Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child or young person for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child or young person.



Emergency Response COVID-19/Flu- Pandemic school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

School Name: Sheiling School
Policy owner: Noah Black
Date: 1st April, 2020
Date shared with staff: 2nd April, 2020
Reviewed: 10/11/2023 by Noah Black

Context

On the 20th of March 2020 parents were asked by the UK government to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and those who absolutely needed to attend.

Schools, and all childcare providers, were asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children and young people – children/ young people who were vulnerable, and children/ young people whose parents were critical to the COVID-19 response and could not be safely cared for at home.

Since September 1st, 2020, schools across England (and the rest of the UK) re- opened to offer full educational provision to all children and young people enrolled.

Whilst the intensity of the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided, COVID-19 continues to have an adverse impact across the UK, and guidance to mitigate and control the COVID-19 continues to apply throughout society and where severe local infections are discovered, infection- control measures may be required to prevent or mitigate the spread of coronavirus as well as measures to eradicate it from areas discovered. Consequently, where localised severe outbreaks arise in the school or the local vicinity of the school, the school provision could be required to temporarily close and the below contingency measures would then apply.

This addendum should be read in conjunction with Sheiling School COVID-19 prevention measures including school-wide COVID-19 risk assessment and supplementary guidance document *What It Means to Me*.

This sub-section of the Sheiling School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Noah Black	07783 125 797	noah.black@sheilingschool.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Syl Edgeley	07783 339 919	syl.edgeley@sheilingschool.org.uk
Head of Care & Deputy DSL	Victoria Welsh	07518 866001	victoria.welsh@sheilingschool.org.uk
Head teacher & Deputy DSL	Dean Frances Hawksley	07783 132315	deanfh@sheilingschool.org.uk
Deputy Head teacher & Deputy DSL	Fergus Bright	07395 803370	fergus.bright@sheilingschool.org.uk
Sheiling School Principal	Justin Davey	07724 384061	justin.davey@sheilingschool.org.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Anthony Nowlan	01454 412194	anthony.nowlan@thornleigh.org.uk
Chair of Trustees	Anthony Nowlan	01454 412194	anthony.nowlan@thornleigh.org.uk

Vulnerable children and young people

Vulnerable children and young people include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 amendment.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority (LA) and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the DSL (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are and have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Sheiling School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: **Head Teacher Dean Frances Hawksley**

Critical workers

Although in such a scenario, children and young people might be required to remain home wherever possible, schools and other educational settings might once again be asked to provide care for the child/ren/young people of any critical workers who need this support. This may include days and times on which the school would not normally be open, including the school holidays. If our school cannot remain open, due to staff illness or self-isolation, or if there is only one child who needs that care, we will notify our local authority South Gloucestershire and / or the relevant placing authority who are responsible for arranging for the child/ren/ young people to be cared for in an alternative setting that can meet their needs.

Attendance monitoring

Sheiling School and social workers will agree with families whether children/ young people in need should be attending school – Sheiling School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Sheiling School will also follow up with any 'critical worker' parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) but the child(ren) subsequently do(es) not attend.

To support the above, Sheiling School will, when communicating with parents, carers and allocated social workers / placing authorities, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child/young person does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Sheiling School will notify their social worker.

If Sheiling School has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable, the children of critical workers or because they are residential pupils who were not able to return home) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE.

If the school has closed, we will complete the return once as requested by the DfE.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Sheiling School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – these are named on the front sheet.

We will endeavour to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available on site at most times when pupils and young people are present. Where this is not the case, a trained DSL or deputy DSL will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example, when working from home.

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to the child & adult protection online management system, **BehaviourWatch**, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputies) and, if required, liaising with children and young people's

social workers where they require access to children/ young people in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

Whatever the scenario, it is important that all Sheiling School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or deputies. On each day, staff on site will be made aware of who these people are and how to contact them.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child or young person, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school safeguarding policy, this includes **following the concerns reporting procedure in accordance with the concerns flowchart** and where requested by the Safeguarding Team member making a prompt report via **BehaviourWatch** which can be done on site or remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff has a concern about a child/ young person but cannot access the recording system, they should telephone the Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or deputy DSL's in accordance with the schools concern reporting flowchart. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff must not just leave an answerphone message but must speak with someone directly.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children and young people in the school or residential provision, they should report the concern [school] to the Headteacher **Dean Frances Hawksley** or [residential] to Head of Care **Victoria Welsh** immediately.

If there is cause to make a notification to the Headteacher/ Head of Care whilst away from school, this should be done by telephone. Staff must not just leave an answerphone message. If the Headteacher/ Head of Care is not contactable, the member of staff should contact either the **DSL Noah Black** or **Deputy DSL's Fergus Bright, Syl Edgeley**.

Concerns about the Headteacher/ Head of Care should be directed to the **Principal Justin Davey**.

Safeguarding Training and induction

Face-to face DSL training is very unlikely to take place during this period; however opportunities to do this via remote digital platforms are now in place.

For the period COVID-19/flu- pandemic measures are in place, a DSL (or deputies and senior staff) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputies) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read at least part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023). The Designated Safeguarding Lead should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Sheiling School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

The existing school workforce may move between schools on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19/flu- pandemic. Where Sheiling School receive staff from another school, we will judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. As a minimum, the visiting professional(s) will be provided with a copy of our safeguarding / child protection policy and the name and contact details of the DSL and deputy DSLs.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children and young people's workforce or gain access to children and young people. When recruiting new staff, Sheiling School will continue to

follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSIE.

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

If staff are deployed from another education or children’s workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children and young people during the COVID-19/flu- pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children’s barred list check (and / or adult barred list check where relevant)
- there are no known concerns about the individual’s suitability to work with children and young people (or adults at risk, where relevant)
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Where Sheiling School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Sheiling School will continue to comply with the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child/ young person or vulnerable adult.

Sheiling School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per Keeping Children Safe in Education and the TRA’s ‘Teacher misconduct: advice for making a referral’.

During the COVID-19/flu-pandemic period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school or college is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Sheiling School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Online safety in school

Sheiling School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online monitoring and filtering system.

Where children and young people are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and young people and online safety away from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children and young people, including online, continue to look out for signs a child/ young person may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children/ young people’s social care and as required the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school’s staff code of conduct.

Sheiling School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR UK requirements.

Below are some simple things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- Where one to one teaching is necessary, this will only be with the explicit written consent of the headteacher, young person and parent(s).
- The DSL, head of department and / or other senior staff must be able to join any virtual lesson at any point.
- Staff and children/ young people must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred or hidden.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms agreed with senior leaders and the IT / network manager to communicate with pupils
- Staff should log and record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children and young people not in school

Sheiling School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils and young people.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for each child/ young person, their parent(s) / carers and the allocated social worker or placing authority.

Details of this communication plan must be recorded, as should a record of any contact made.

The communication plan may include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Sheiling School and its Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider any referrals as appropriate, taking into account the local criteria for action.

In addition, the school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages and will share with all parents/primary guardians a contact document called "[What to do if you are worried about a child/ young person](#)" which contain multiple local authority contact details.

Sheiling School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances have a significant potential to affect the mental health of pupils/ young people and their parents. Teachers and pastoral staff at Sheiling School will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Sheiling School will ensure that if we are unable to care for the child/ren of critical workers, residential pupils and vulnerable children and young people on site, we will liaise with the placing local authority and the parent / carer to find a suitable alternative; e.g, at a 'hub' school or via a multi-disciplinary package of support. In that situation, the DSL will ensure that the DSL of the hub school / lead practitioner is made aware of any relevant safeguarding information relating to a child/ young person.

Supporting children/ young people in school

Sheiling School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils and young people.

Sheiling School will continue to be a safe space for all children and young people to attend and flourish. The Headteacher and Head of Care will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil/ young person ratio numbers are appropriate, maximising safety.

Sheiling School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of coronavirus.

Sheiling School will ensure that where we care for children/ young people of critical workers, residential pupils/ young people and vulnerable children/young people on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child/young person and recorded on their pastoral or safeguarding record as appropriate.

Child on Child Abuse

Sheiling School recognises that during a school closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of child on child abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and of those outlined within the school's safeguarding & child protection policy.

The school will listen carefully, and work with the child/young person, family and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that child/young person.

All concerns and actions taken must be recorded on [BehaviourWatch](#) and appropriate referrals made.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

A 1.0 Links with Other School Policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Promoting Positive Behaviour in School/ in the Houses Policies
- Promoting SMSC and Fundamental British Values Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Children's Home Statement of Purpose
- Adult Protection Policy and Procedures
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Residents Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Health and safety Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Attendance Policy

- Online Safety policy & acceptable use policy agreements
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Sex and relationship in education
- First aid Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

A 1.1 Abuse Definitions and Further Information on Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

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.

Signs & Indicators

a) Bruising

Should always be considered in the context of the age and developmental level of the child. Most falls or accidents produce one bruise on a single surface, usually a bang protuberance. Bruising in accidents is usually on the front of the body as children generally fall forwards.

b) Bites

These may leave clear impressions of teeth. Human bites are oval or crescent shaped. It can be difficult to distinguish the bite of an adult from that of a child over four years.

c) Burns and scalds

Redness, rawness and blistering of skin can be caused by burns or scalds.

A child getting into water that is too hot of his/her own accord will struggle to get out again and there will be splash marks. Small round burns may be cigarette burns (but may be friction burns and accidental if along the bony protuberances of the spine).

d) Scars

Children may have scars, but notice should be taken of:

- An exceptionally large number of scars of differing ages, especially if coupled with current bruising.
- Scars of unusual shape, e.g. round, from possible cigarette burns.
- Large scars from burns or lacerations that did not receive medical attention.

e) Fractures

These should be suspected if there is pain, swelling or discolouration over a bone or joint, or if a child is reluctant to use a limb. The most common non-accidental fractures are to the long bones, i.e. arms and legs, and to the ribs.

- Skull fractures should always be suspected if there is bruising to the head of a young child, and paediatric advice should be sought. Unusual drowsiness fits of vomiting may indicate intercranial injury.
- A skeletal survey examination looking for old or unrecognised fractures should always be considered and discussed with a senior doctor in the investigation of suspected abuse, particularly involving young children.

f) Injuries to the genital or rectal area

Any reported injuries, discharge or discomfort of the genital or rectal area should be taken seriously and referred for medical examination. Non-medical staff should not, under any circumstances, undertake such an examination themselves.

g) Poisoning

Poisoning of children may give rise to recurrent episodes of illness and sickness including vomiting, diarrhea, high temperature, skin rashes, paralysis, etc.

h) Internal injuries (abdomen, intracranial, chest)

Violent shaking or physical abuse can cause hemorrhages or can rupture internal organs. There may be little evidence of external injury but the child may appear shocked, with pallor, sweating and a weak pulse.

Expert advice must be sought in any case of suspected non-accidental injury. If a member of staff does have reason to suspect non-accidental injury, the pupil should be seen by the School's School and Home Nurse and follow the safeguarding reporting procedure.

The injury should be noted and recorded in full in the relevant reporting forms i.e. injury form, body map, etc.

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 from 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.

Signs and Indicators

- Excessively clingy or attention-seeking behaviour
- Increased challenging behaviour
- Any negative changes in behaviour
- Withdrawal
- Low esteem
- Apathy
- Constantly seeking to please
- Over familiarity
- Decreased concentration
- Decreased school performance and attendance
- Lack of appetite
- Weight loss/gain
- Increased sleep disturbance
- Onset of wetting or soiling

- Unusual behaviours
- Anxiety and fear

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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Signs and Indicators

Sexual abuse often presents in a disguised way. Although some children have obvious genital injuries, a sexually transmitted disease or are pregnant, relatively few show such clear signs. Recognition of sexual abuse generally follows either a direct statement from the child (or very occasionally from the abuser), or suspicion based on the child's circumstances, behaviour or physical symptoms or signs.

The following indicators should alert professionals to the possibility of sexual abuse. Suspicion increases when several features are present together.

Physical Manifestations:

- a. Vaginal bleeding in pre-pubescent girls.
- b. Genital lacerations or bruising.
- c. Sexually transmitted diseases.
- d. Abnormal dilation of the vagina, urethra or anus
- e. Pregnancy, especially in younger girls

In a number of cases sexual abuse may come to light during the investigation of bruising or other physical injury.

Emotional and behavioural manifestations:

- a. Frequent sexual references and 'over-sexualised' in talk, play or in drawings
- b. Sexually inappropriate behaviour towards adults or children
- c. Hinting at sexual activity or secrets through words or play
- d. Excessive awareness or knowledge of sexual matters inappropriate to age and development of child.

Other indicators that may be associated with sexual abuse:

- a. Running away from home
- b. Suicide attempts and self-mutilation.

As well as all the Signs and indicators listed under Emotional Abuse.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse – please see our CSE policy statement for further information including possible signs and indicators.

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, for example, 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.

Signs and Indicators

a) General Health

Poor growth in height and weight can be important signs of neglect, and all such children need medical assessment. Significant indicators are:

- Steals food or voracious when offered food or has an eating disorder due to food deprivation
- An unresponsive child with poor growth due to food deprivation or inadequate diet
- General vitamin/mineral deficiencies affecting milestones, bone growth, concentration and leading to minor to significant diseases like Rickets, etc.
- Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses

b) Physical Appearance

Inadequate clothing and footwear (size and weather)

Poor general hygiene

Lack of intimate care which may lead to rashes and sores

c) Emotional signs

See Emotional Abuse.

General Points

- Some signs and symptoms of physical or sexual abuse may seem insignificant in themselves, but repeated injuries, even of a minor nature, may be symptomatic of more serious abuse.
- When considering an explanation for any injury which has occurred. Attention should be given to:
 - a. The feasibility of the explanation
 - b. Whether it is appropriate to the child's age and developmental level.
 - c. Whether it was dealt with suitably and promptly.
- NB Always pay attention to the pupil's account of the injury if appropriate and record this accurately. Do not use your own interpretation of what the child has said.
- All forms of abuse may cause the child to withdraw or show unexplained changes in behaviour and we have to bear in mind the possibility of one child abusing another. At the beginning and end of each half term each child should be checked, as appropriate to age and sensitivity, for any possible

physical signs of abuse while washing or bathing. Such opportunities will also enable observation through the term.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

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

A 1.2 Key Legislative Summaries

- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 1 of the schedule to the [Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), which places a duty on non-maintained special schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and young people at the school
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children and young people
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting

their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children

A 1.3 The Three Safeguarding Partners

The following **3 safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

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

A1.4 Further Information on Specific Safeguarding Issues

This information is based on the advice in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. Annex B also includes information on further issues to be aware of, including children's involvement in the court system, children with family members in prison, child criminal exploitation, and domestic abuse.

Children missing from education

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Child-on-Child Abuse) Sexual harassment

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

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

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual "jokes" or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this 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; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and
 - upskirting

Upskirting

'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 a criminal offence.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam.

Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

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

Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a child/ young person:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

Homelessness

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

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

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

County Lines & [Modern Slavery](#)

How does County Lines affect children and vulnerable young people?

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

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation.

Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. One of the key factors found in most cases of county lines exploitation is the presence of some form of exchange (e.g. carrying drugs in return for something).

Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or clothes) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived friendship or affection).

It is important to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a young person or vulnerable adult does not make them any less of a victim.

It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a young person who engages in county lines activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family.

Who is vulnerable to county lines exploitation?

The national picture on county lines continues to develop but there are recorded cases of:

- children as young as 12 years old being exploited or moved by gangs to courier drugs out of their local area; 15-16 years is the most common age range
- both males and females being exploited
- White British children being targeted because gangs perceive they are more likely to evade police detection but a person of any ethnicity or nationality may be exploited
- the use of social media to make initial contact with children and young people
- Class A drug users being targeted so that gangs can takeover their homes (known as '[cuckooing](#)').

Within the UK, county lines exploitation is widespread, with gangs from big cities including London, Manchester and Liverpool operating throughout England, Wales and Scotland. Gangs are known to target vulnerable children and adults; some of the factors that heighten a person's vulnerability include:

- having prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic violence or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)
- social isolation or social difficulties • economic vulnerability
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status • connections with other people involved in gangs
- having a physical or learning disability
- having mental health or substance misuse issues;
- being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- being excluded from mainstream education, in particular attending a Pupil Referral Unit.

Use local safeguarding process to share concerns, the first step of which is to contact the DSL/ Deputy DSL's within the school who will make a referral to social care.

If you are aware that a potential victim may have come from / travelled to another area as part of their involvement in county lines, you should include this information in your referral to enable liaison between safeguarding agencies in the different areas.

If you are worried that a vulnerable person is at immediate risk of harm you should also contact the police: your local public protection officer or, in the case of a child, local children's protection officer.

If you are a designated First Responder for the [National Referral Mechanism \(NRM\)](#), you should also consider referring any young person or adult you suspect of being a potential victim of trafficking or modern slavery to the NRM.

Any referral should be after appropriate safeguarding steps have been taken and in light of multi-agency discussions. Further information and guidance on county lines exploitation can be found from [The Children's Society](#).

So-called 'honour-based' violence (including FGM and forced marriage)

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

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

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

FGM

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

Section 7.4 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil or young person confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil/ young person already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
 - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
 - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
 - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children or young people about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)

- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

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

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

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

The DSL will:

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

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Schools have a duty to prevent children and young people from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children and young people at risk.

We will assess the risk of children and young people in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

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

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology.

Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

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

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends

- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children and young people who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong. If staff are concerned about a pupil/young person, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.2 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL. Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

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

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

Visitors to school are required to sign into the visitor's digital log and wear a visitors badge; they will also be given a leaflet regarding the school's safeguarding practices.

Visitors and staff are expected to sign the visitors' book in the residential houses and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

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

Non-collection of children/ young people

If a child/ young person is not collected at the end of the school day, we will:

Contact the parents/ primary guardians/ carers and establish that alternative collection arrangements are in place. Once this has been established, staff will continue to provide the necessary support to the child/ young person as required whilst remaining on school site for collection until this has occurred- verifying with parents/ primary guardians, carers the identity of third- party transport (ie: special taxi services). Occasions where school may be required to provide transport home to a pupils will be assessed on a case-by- case basis and be determined by the particular circumstances for the non- collection as well as the individual needs of the child/ young person. Following non- collection of children/ young people where the delay has been prolonged, a report of this incident will be compiled on the school's recording system.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. Please refer to Missing Pupil procedure for further details.

Online Safety

Children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks.

At Sheiling School we strive to equip our pupils and their families with the knowledge they need to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so our pupils are able to reap the benefits of the online world, whilst being aware to the dangers and risks and providing them with skills to keep themselves safe or receive the adult support they need to keep themselves safe. For details related to the school's curricular approach to online safety including the school's measures to keep children and young people safe online within the school provision, please see the school's **Online Safety policy** for further details.

Appendix 2

A2.0 Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks – policy and procedures

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

New staff:

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the [2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006](#). Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these (including carry out checks online) and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children and young people.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

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

Existing staff:

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children/ young people, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

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

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child/ young person or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff:

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

Contractors:

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

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

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

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

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

Trainee/student teachers:

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

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

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

Volunteers:

We will:

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

Governors:

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

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

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil or young person with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children and young people from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

A2.1 Responding to Concerns and Reports of Alleged Abuse

Members of staff need to be aware how to respond and what to say when a child/young person discloses abuse.

Some possibilities are:

“I’m taking what you say very seriously” (better than “I believe you”)
“I’m glad you told me- you’re right to tell, it’s okay to tell”
“I’m sorry that it happened. It’s not your fault”
“I care and, if I have any worries about your safety I’ll get others to help you”

Let the child or young person know what you are going to do in a way that is appropriate to their level of understanding and tell them what is likely to happen next. You may need to involve the Speech and Language Therapist.

Always finish on a positive note, praise the child or young person for telling - try not to leave the child or young person alone, offer if possible to talk again later.

No members of staff should interrogate or attempt to investigate. Rather encourage the child or young person to say what they wish until enough information is gained to decide whether or not referral is appropriate. Even if this is not the case the conversation should be recorded. In order to gain the correct information from a child or young person raising a concern, members of staff must ensure that any questions asked are open. Do not interrogate but employ open questions.

Only ask enough questions to gain very basic information - it will become someone else’s task to take this further.

Take allegations seriously and support - DO NOT interrogate!

Ask **WHEN**: e.g. “When did it happen?” NOT “Did it happen last night?”

Ask **WHERE**: e.g. “Where did it happen?” NOT “Did he/she come into your bedroom?”

Ask **WHO**: e.g. “Who did it?” NOT “Was it daddy/babysitter/John?”

Ask **WHAT**: e.g. “What happened?” NOT “Did such and such happen?”

Avoid HOW and WHY questions - these require a judgement by the child or young person and may also induce self-recrimination.

A2.2 Referrals

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children’s social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

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

If the child or young person’s situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child or young person’s situation improves.

Reporting a Serious Incident to the Charity Commission:

In some cases where safeguarding matters have been referred to the local authority, it may be deemed necessary for the school to make a further referral to the Charity Commission. Further information of what would meet a Charity Commission referral can be read here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity#what-to-report>

Other External Referrals:

As the Sheiling School’s residential provision is registered under Ofsted as a Children’s Home, for safeguarding matters or serious incidents, the Children’s Home is required to notify Ofsted [via a Regulation 40 notification](#) of the incident within 24 hours as well as provide updates on actions and outcomes following the referral.

A2.3 Code of Good Practice For Staff

The Sheiling School has adopted the national Guidance for Safe Working Practice (Safer Recruitment Consortium / DfE / NASS 2015) – see <http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf> All staff are provided with information at induction and refresher training on safe conduct and expected standards of behaviour.

Key points given in training:

Ensure any physical contact between a staff member and a child or young person is a considered action, necessary and for the purposes of instruction or immediate care.

Avoid where possible being alone with a child or young person. Where circumstances make this unavoidable try to ensure that others are within earshot and preferably within vision.

Never make salacious, suggestive or demeaning remarks/gestures to/or in the presence of children and young people.

Share your concerns with a senior colleague if you suspect that a child or young person is becoming inappropriately attracted to you.

Seek advice and support in circumstances where your relationship with, or feelings towards, a child or young person are placing you at risk of unprofessional behaviour. You are urged to seek advice and support from a senior colleague or management.

From time to time personal circumstances arise which can adversely affect your professional relationships (e.g. bereavement, health or relationship breakdown). Should this be the case you are encouraged to seek advice and support from a senior colleague

Avoid any physical horseplay (e.g. wrestling or tickling) which any child, or young person, or staff, as visitors might misinterpret the situation, no matter how innocent or well-intentioned your actions might be.

Always respect a child's or young person's right to privacy.

The use of restrictive physical intervention on a child must involve only the absolute minimum force necessary and is permissible only when you are certain that the child is at imminent risk of endangering themselves, yourself, others, or causing or about to serious damage to property. Where possible summon a colleague to witness the situation and give you appropriate help. (Follow guidance given in Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy)

Always be fully informed of the School's policy and procedures for child protection.

A2.4 Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/ young person, or may have harmed a child/ young person, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/ young person, or

- Behaved towards a child/ young person or children/ young people in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children or young people.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child/ young person or other children/ young people is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child/young person or children/ young people concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children/ young people
- Redeploying the Individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children and young people
- Moving the child/ young person or children/ young people to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role.

(Please refer to appendix of disciplinary procedure on more information on suspension)

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the Safeguarding Team and Principal (or chair of Governor where the Principal is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for

example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)

- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the local authority designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the local authority designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the local authority designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. This could include a senior colleague or a trade union representative, or a staff member trained in providing counselling services.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children/ young person involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children/ young person involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child/ young person, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child/ young person

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the governing board will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the CEO, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the CEO, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children/ young person involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for any Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

A2.5 Reporting & Responding to Low-Level Concerns

As part of encouraging an open and transparent culture within the school provision, **all** concerns are encouraged to be shared be that for or on behalf of children and young people, staff and others. These concerns may not necessarily meet the harm threshold; however, they may be indicators towards worrying behaviour or conduct where appropriate action to safeguard children, young people and others is needed. Proactive reporting enables the school to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, whilst minimizing risk of abuse.

What is a “low-level” concern?

A low-level concern is any concern- no matter how small-even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a “nagging doubt”.

Worries or Concerns related to Staff/Adults

In the case of low- level concerns related to adults and staff this could include:

- conduct that is inconsistent with the school’s staff code of conduct- including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the harm-threshold or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to LADO

Proactive reporting ensures that staff working on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries according to the ethos and values of the school.

Low level concerns can arise from a number of sources and such as suspicion, complaint, or disclosures from a pupil, parent or other adult in the school provision. It can also arise outside of the school or as a result of safer recruitment vetting checks carried out by the school (KCSIE pages 100- 104).

Staff are trained to report all concerns related to practice or conduct using the concern reporting procedures (*see A2.6 for details*). These can then be recorded on the school’s recording platform BehaviourWatch or alternatively, concerns can also be submitted via e-mail to safeguarding@sheilingschool.org.uk

Where the concern relates to a member of the school Safeguarding Team (DSL or deputies) or Head of department, these can be reported directly to the school Principal and or Chair of Governors.

These concerns will be treated seriously and investigated accordingly, gathering additional information as necessary with an outcome provided and actions taken in accordance with the school’s performance, capability or disciplinary processes.

Reporting Worries or Concerns Anonymously

Where a person feels unable to report a worry or concern directly, this can be reported anonymously. If the concerns are related to staff working with children and young people, this can be shared in written form and deposited in the school’s white **Safeguarding Post box** on the ground floor in **Thornbury Park**.

Where the concern or worry relates to a Head of department or a member of the school Safeguarding Team (DSL or deputies) this can be reported directly via letter to the school Principal and or Chair of Governors. These concerns will be treated seriously and investigated accordingly, gathering additional information where possible and actions taken in accordance with the school’s performance, capability or disciplinary processes.

Worries or Concerns related to Children & Young People

Where there are worries or concerns related to the behaviour or conduct of children and young people, these are activity encouraged to be shared with the school Safeguarding Team (DSL or deputies) using the

concern reporting procedures for staff (*see A2.6 for details*) or for pupils. For pupils sharing worries/concerns, these can be reported directly to a member of the school Safeguarding Team; these will then be recorded on the school's recording platform BehaviourWatch.

Pupils are also encouraged to share directly via letter-form and deposit this in the school's white **Safeguarding Post box** on the ground floor **in Thornbury Park**. Alternatively, concerns can also be submitted via e-mail to safeguarding@sheilingschool.org.uk

These concerns will be reviewed by a member of the school Safeguarding Team (DSL or deputies) with assistance of key staff and updates/ outcome provided to those who have reported the concern. Such concerns are logged on the school's recording system and monitored to determine patterns of behaviour of worry. Additional professional advice and support via the placing authority may be initiated and review and adaptations of the support in the school provision considered to help address the behaviours whilst ensuring the safety of school peers and others.

SHEILING SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING FLOW CHART

If you have concerns or information that a child/young person may be, has been, or is being abused, is accessing content related to illicit material, extremist views or putting themselves at risk of child sexual exploitation, it is imperative to speak directly to the most appropriate person according to this flow chart in order that a prompt decision can be made to ensure that no child/young person is at risk of harm or abuse. This applies 24 hours/day, seven days/week.

