SHERBORNE
SCHOOLS GROUP

Safeguarding and Child Protection (including EYFS) Policy

Approving body: SSG Board of Governors
Owner: Head of Sherborne Girls
Authors: Designated Safeguarding Leads

Executive Summary

This policy is for all staff and Governors within the Sherborne Schools Group and consists of three main documents:

- **Part 1:** the overarching safeguarding policy
- **Part 2:** detailed child protection procedures
- **Part 3:** a separate child protection summary sheet

Please note that throughout this document, 'child' refers to a young person under the age of 18. However, within the Sherborne Schools Group, Child Protection is extended to all members of our pupil body irrespective of age. The terms 'child/children' and 'pupil/pupils' are used synonymously throughout this document.

Our Nominated Governor for Safeguarding is:

Canon Nicki Edwards

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

Hanford Prep – Mrs Susie Askew
Sherborne Girls – Ms Leonie Cole
Sherborne Prep – Mr Alastair Bowden
Sherborne Boys – Mr Allister Sheffield
Sherborne International – Mr David Shaw

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[1] Pending ratification by the Board of Governors

SHERBORNE SCHOOLS GROUP

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Designated responsibility in relation to staff

Sherborne Schools Group		Designated Senior Managers				
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Useful Contact Details

Dorset Family Support and Advice Line

Single point of contact for safeguarding concerns: 01305 228 558

(Monday to Friday 8am - 10pm; Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays 9am - 10pm)

For out of hours emergencies call: 01305 221 000

If you believe somebody is at risk of **immediate harm**, call: **999**

Contact information for Children's Services in other Local Authority areas can be found on their websites.

Safeguarding in Education Service

The Dorset Safeguarding and Standards Team comprises Children's Services managers and advisors including:

- the **Education Safeguarding Standards Advisor** who offers advice and support to Headteachers and DSLs in relation to safeguarding and child protection issues
- the Local Authority Designated Officer (**LADO**) to whom allegations against adults who work with children in education establishments must be reported

Education Safeguarding Standards Advisors: 01305 221 122

For DSL/school queries: safeguardingandstandardsadvisors@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

For concerns about a child resident in Dorset: sasteam@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Dorset LADO

The LADO is the person to whom concerns and allegations about a member of staff or volunteer who works with children in schools should be reported.

LADOs: 01305 221 122 lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Other Organisations

- Childline www.childline.org.uk 0800 11 11
- Samaritans www.samaritans.org 0845 790 9090
- Crimestoppers www.crimestoppers-uk.org 0800 555 111
- Kidscape Bullying Helpline www.kidscape.org.uk 0845 1205 204
- NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk 0800 800 5000
  Whistleblowing helpline help@nspcc.org.uk 0800 0280285
- RU Safe? (Barnardo's - Child Sexual Exploitation Service) 01494 461112
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office 0207 008 0151
- Office of the Children's Commissioner for England 0800 528 0731

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PART 1: Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out how the Sherborne Schools Group (the Group) is carrying out its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with Section 175 of the Education Act 2002. It seeks to set out the principles and procedures we operate to protect children from harm, provides information regarding our safeguarding responsibilities and details how these responsibilities should be carried out.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

The Group fully recognises our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is one of a range of documents that set out the safeguarding responsibilities of the whole Group. We wish to create a safe, welcoming and vigilant environment for children where they feel valued and are respected.

Safeguarding information is published throughout our schools and all children know who they can talk to in school and how they can make an anonymous disclosure.

We recognise that our schools may provide the only stability in the lives of children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering harm. We are aware that the behaviour of a child may be impacted by their lived experiences and their responses can range from being angry and violent to sad and withdrawn.

We are able to play a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Wherever the word "staff" is used in this policy, it refers to all those working for or on behalf of the Group, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in a paid or voluntary capacity; including ancillary, supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers, Governors and those representing the Group in its Charity status.

This policy will be updated as and when required and annually as a minimum. This may require our policy to be published 'pending Governor/Trustee ratification'.

Principles and Aims

This policy aims to demonstrate to staff, Governors/Trustees, pupils, parents, stakeholders and other partners, the Group's commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

The welfare of our children is paramount. All children, regardless of age, gender, nationality, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.

We recognise that all adults in our schools have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Our schools are committed to developing a culture of safeguarding by providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected and which promotes their social, physical and moral development. Children in our schools feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.

This policy is used in conjunction with staff training and continued professional development to strengthen our whole school approach to safeguarding within the Group.

The Sherborne Schools Group has a culture of prevention and education in order to raise responsible, caring adults of the future. The schools within the Group encourage respectful behaviour and language to be used to all; a restorative approach to incidents of concern; and a commitment to make reasonable adjustments to encourage pupils to remain in education and to feel included and that they belong in our school.

There is no tolerance of discriminatory language or abuse towards staff or pupils.

Schools within the Group will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- involving them in decisions which affect them
- always acting in their best interests
- never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other forms of discrimination, including through the use of technology
- ensuring the curriculum and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) lessons afford them opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe, particularly when using technology and where appropriate in respect of radicalisation, extremist behaviour and preventing domestic abuse, helping pupils to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience
- supporting attendance and taking action if a child is absent from school regularly
- maintaining a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, both on and off-site
- creating an environment where children know they can approach adults, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- having a senior member of staff as the DSL and ensuring this person has the time, support, training and resources to perform the role effectively
- ensuring that there is always cover for the DSL role, should the DSL be out of school during school hours, for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- ensuring that all staff working with Looked-After Children have information appropriate to their role regarding e.g. the child's care arrangements, legal status and contact with birth parents
- having a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after/in care (mandatory in maintained schools; best practice in others)
- making sure all staff, volunteers and Governors are aware of and committed to the safeguarding policy and child protection procedures, to ensure that staff are able to identify children at risk and also understand their individual responsibility to take action
- ensuring that all staff and Governors have read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSiE).
- putting in place mechanisms to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE

- identifying any concerns early and ensuring that those children considered to be at risk are provided with appropriate help to prevent them from escalating.
- sharing information about child safeguarding concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving children and their parents/carers appropriately. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children
- acknowledging and actively promoting that multi-agency working is often the best way to support children and their families to promote the welfare of children and to protect them from harm as no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances
- working with individual practitioners and agencies concerned with child protection
- maintaining a close working relationship with Dorset Social Care, ensuring open communication that facilitates the use of no name referrals where appropriate. The importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies is recognised by the governors
- taking the right action, in accordance with the relevant local authority inter-agency safeguarding procedures, if a child discloses or there are indicators of abuse[2].
- in the event of pupils being identified as being at risk of radicalisation the schools within the Group will consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include Children's Social Care or Channel or Children's Social Care, for example
- keeping clear, accurate and contemporaneous safeguarding and child protection records
- recruiting staff, including temporary staff and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements and also making sure that at least one appointment panel member has undertaken safer recruitment training (mandatory in maintained schools; best practice in others). We check the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and ensure that other organisations who provide staff to the school also operate appropriate checks and procedures
- ensuring that the Single Central Register (SCR) is kept up to date and that it is checked on a termly basis by the nominated Governor for Safeguarding
- providing effective management for the above through induction, support and regular training appropriate to the role
- adopting a Staff Code of Conduct for all staff and volunteers, which all staff are required to read and sign to say they have done so, which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/ pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- ensuring staff and volunteers understand about 'whistleblowing' and how to escalate concerns about pupils or staff if they think the right action has not been taken to safeguard children
- promoting a culture in which staff feel able to report to senior leaders what they consider to be unacceptable behaviour or breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct by their colleagues, having faith that they will be listened to, and appropriate action taken
- dealing appropriately with any allegations/concerns about the behaviour of staff or volunteers in accordance with the process set out in statutory guidance
- providing effective management for the above through induction, support and regular training appropriate to role

[2] Staff within the Group recognise that children are not always ready or able to talk about their experience of abuse and/or may not always recognise that they are being abused.

- safeguarding pupils from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material by ensuring that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and robust and that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to filtering and monitoring
- checking that appropriate child protection procedures are in place when pupils attend off-site activities. All staff are bound by the relevant Educational Visits Policy when arranging such trips. Those members of staff responsible for organising exchange visits where pupils are accommodated by host families are required to check host families and gain appropriate reassurances from partner schools whether in the UK or abroad.
- having appropriate procedures in place to ensure that safeguarding continues to the highest standard when school premises within the Group are used for a non-school activity
- operating robust and sensible Health and Safety procedures
- operating clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse
- exercising our duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 by ensuring all staff undergo 'Prevent' training in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour and by assessing the risk of our pupils being drawn into terrorism
- putting in place mechanisms to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE Part One/ Annex B
- providing appropriate training for staff, on an annual basis, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively
- to establish an ethos of mutual support amongst all staff, so that any questions and concerns may be shared
- ensuring all the necessary checks are carried out on the suitability of people serving on the SSG Governing body
- making prompt and detailed reports to the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency when appropriate, having consulted the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Group recognises that because of day-to day contact with children, all school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The schools will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are many different adults within the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- include opportunities in the Wellbeing curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, particularly when using technology and where appropriate in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- be alert, in particular to the potential need for early help or Family Help of children who have additional needs (e.g. medical needs, family circumstances, disability or specific learning needs)
- take account of the age range of pupils and the boarding environment provided by adjusting their staff and pupil safeguarding training to reflect the greatest risks posed to the pupils of the school.

Statutory Framework, Key Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the Group will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Working together to safeguard children 2026: statutory guidance
- Education Inspection Framework
- Teachers' Standards
- What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools
- Information Sharing
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2026
- Working together to improve school attendance
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2026

We take seriously our responsibility to ensure that we have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which we believe that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Our procedures also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse, including low level concerns.

We will take steps to ensure that any groups or individuals who hire and/or use our building or grounds inside or outside of school hours, follow the local child protection guidelines and are aware of their safeguarding duties and this policy.

We will ensure that all staff read and understand:

- The Group's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- The relevant school Online Safety policies
- The relevant school Low Level Concerns policies
- KCSiE (2026) Part One
- The Group's Staff Code of Conduct

We will ensure that all staff are aware of:

- The Pan-Dorset Continuum of Need Guidance
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from Education
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- The identity of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies (DDSLs) within the Group
- The additional vulnerabilities of children who are looked after/previously looked after, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and children who are young carers

PART 2: Child Protection Procedures

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board/Board of Trustees

Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda for every meeting of the full board.

The Governing Board/Board of Trustees of the Sherborne Schools Group understands and fulfils its responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- they liaise with the headteachers and/or designated teachers over safeguarding matters. (This is a strategic role rather than operational, governors will not be involved in concerns regarding individual children)
- there is a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy that reflects the whole school approach to child-on-child abuse
- there is a Staff Code of Conduct that includes the process for responding to low level concerns and acceptable use of technology
- child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the Staff Code of Conduct, are consistent with statutory requirements. They are reviewed when needed (annually as a minimum)
- the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is publicly available on the school websites
- all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the Group Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Staff Code of Conduct
- all staff sign to say they have read and understood KCSiE (2026) Part One and that mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance
- all Governors/Trustees sign to say they have read and understood KCSiE (2026) and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- the Group operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and ensure that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training within the last five years (see SSG Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy)
- the Group has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the headteachers), volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned
- the Governing Board has at least one nominated governor responsible for safeguarding who has undertaken appropriate training for the role. The chair of governors is responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse made against a headteacher.
- an annual audit of Group's safeguarding policies, procedures and practices is undertaken with the headteachers and designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and that this is reported to the Local Authority.
- the Group is aware of relevant legislation and local guidance, which has been agreed through the local safeguarding partnership arrangements
- there are clear lines of accountability for safeguarding within the Group's leadership
- a member of the senior leadership team in each school has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and they will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection; the role is explicit in the role holder's job description

- DSLs and their DDSLs undertake multi-agency (Level 3) safeguarding training which is updated every two years
- there is a designated teacher in each school to promote the educational achievement of children looked after who are on the school roll
- all members of the Governing Board receive annual safeguarding training
- at least one member of the Governing Board has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years
- children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum[3] covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and through relationships education or relationships and sex education (RSE)
- appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future
- appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place (see relevant Online Safety and Network Security policies).

The Headteachers

The Headteachers will ensure that:

- the safeguarding and child protection policy and related policies and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and DDSLs to carry out their roles effectively
- systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback, which operate with the best interests of the child at heart
- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing/managing allegations against staff procedures
- pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online, the PSHEE curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant and current
- behaviour expectations around the whole school site will be consistent with the safeguarding and relationship lessons taught in the classroom
- they liaise with the local authority designated officer (LADO) within 24 hours before taking any action, and then on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff or a volunteer

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

The DSLs will;

- Hold lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in the relevant school, this responsibility will not be delegated

[3] With the exception of Sherborne International (SI) Short Courses, where PSHEE and RSE do not form part of the programme of study. This is covered at SI through other opportunities included in the curriculum and through assemblies and House meetings for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse, particularly when using technology, and where appropriate in respect of radicalisation and extremist behaviour. Where these subjects are specifically named hereafter, these SI specific differences apply.

- act as a source of support and expertise for the whole school community in regard to our safeguarding duties
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- undertake multi-agency (Level 3) safeguarding training with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, but at least annually
- undertake Prevent awareness training
- refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse to Dorset Council's Family Support and Advice Line and/or the local authority where the child usually resides
- act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns
- keep detailed, accurate records, either written or using appropriate online software, of all concerns about a child, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral
- ensure that all such records are kept confidential, stored securely and are separate from the pupil's general file
- ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional safeguarding and child protection file is marked on the pupil general file
- ensure that a copy of the safeguarding and child protection file is retained until such time that the new school acknowledges receipt of the original file. The copy will then be shredded / destroyed
- liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working together to safeguard children 2026
- have a working knowledge of the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and Dorset Children's Social Care processes and procedures
- ensure that either they, or an appropriate staff member, attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments and provide a report, where required, which has been shared with the parents and child (depending on age and understanding)
- notify Children's Social Care if a child subject to a child protection plan is absent from school without explanation (-)
- ensure that all staff sign to say they have read, understood and agree to work within the Group's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff code of conduct and KCSiE (2026) Part One and ensure that the policies are used appropriately
- organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all school staff and governors
- ensure that the School keeps a record of pupil attendance and address any absences
- undertake, with the Headteachers and Governing Board, an annual audit of the Group's safeguarding policies, procedures and practices and ensure that this is submitted to the Local Authority
- have an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing Early Help and intervention and will support members of staff where Early Help, including support provided through the local authority's Family Help arrangements, is appropriate
- recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation
- be alert to the potential need for support provided by other agencies including the local authority for children who have additional needs, including medical needs, family circumstances, disability, English as an Additional Language (EAL) or specific learning needs
- help to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and leadership staff

- ensure that the name of the DSL and DDSLs are clearly advertised in the school and on the website, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse
- ensure that they, or a deputy, are available during term time school hours[4] for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- ensure that there are adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours or out of term activities.

This list is not exhaustive: please see Annex B of KCSiE (2026).

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)

A DDSL will;

- be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils.
- In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

All school staff and volunteers

All school staff and volunteers will;

- understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action
- undertake safeguarding and health and safety training appropriate to their role and are familiar with the suite of safeguarding policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Staff Code of Conduct
- consider at all times what is in the best interests of the child
- know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse (see Appendix 3)
- refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary, where the child is at immediate risk, to the Police or the Front Door for Dorset Children's Social Care or if a child lives out of borough, to the relevant local authority (see Appendix 2)
- provide a safe environment in which children can learn

Safe School, Safe Staff

Within the Group, we will ensure that;

- at least one member of every recruitment panel has completed safer recruitment training within the last five years
- safer recruitment practices are adhered to, including appropriate DBS checks, reference checks and any additional checks relevant to the role undertaken. The Group has a Safer Recruitment Policy (see SSG Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy), which is available as a separate document
- all staff are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with staff, pupils, parents, agents, guardians and other representatives of the pupils, and adhere to the SSG Staff Code of Conduct

[4] For Sherborne International, 'term time school hours' is defined as any time when the School is open for Short Courses or Exeats.

- there will be no use of alcohol by staff or pupils on school trips or at residential units (please refer to the relevant school Educational Visits policies and Alcohol policies)
- our policies will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time
- adequate risk assessments are in place including for off-site activities, after school clubs and residential trips (please refer to the relevant Risk Assessment, Supervision of Pupils, and Educational Visits policies)
- any disciplinary proceedings against staff related to child protection matters are concluded in full in accordance with Government guidance KCSiE (2026), the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP), LADO and HR policy, procedures and guidance
- staff have the confidence, and are fully aware of how to report misconduct, including low level concerns (please refer to the relevant Low Level Concerns policies)
- all staff receive information about the Group's safeguarding arrangements, safeguarding statement, Staff Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, the role and names of the DSLs and their DDSLs at the site/s where they are working, and KCSiE (2026) Part One on induction, as well as other relevant procedures such as health and safety and online safety
- all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which is regularly updated. In addition, they receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually
- all members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns
- all staff and governors have regular safeguarding awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- the safeguarding and child protection policy is made available via our school websites or other means and parents and carers are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy via the school handbook, newsletter or website
- all parents and carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through the publication of the safeguarding and child protection policy and are able to access this on our websites or via the school offices
- the names of the DSL and DDSLs are clearly advertised in each school with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse
- all staff will be given a copy of Part One of KCSiE (2026) and will sign to say they have read and understood it, the DSLs and the Governing Board are required to read the whole document

Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply.

Where services or activities are not directly supervised or managed by Group staff, the relevant School will obtain appropriate assurance that the provider has effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including suitable safer-recruitment procedures. Those arrangements will be inspected where appropriate, and the provider must have a clear means of liaising with the School on safeguarding matters.

Where activities involving children take place on Group premises, relevant leases, licences and hire agreements will include appropriate safeguarding obligations and permit the Group to suspend or terminate use where those obligations are not met. The arrangements will identify how the relevant DSL or DDSL can be contacted while the premises are in use.

This is particularly important for holiday programmes, lettings, sports activities and external providers.

If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures. When our pupils attend off-site activities, we will ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from our school with a view to educating at home, we will work together with the parent/carer, EHE Coordinator and other professionals to ensure that this decision has been made in the best interests of the child. We recognise that this is particularly relevant where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Suspensions and permanent exclusions

The Group recognises that children who are suspended or permanently excluded may be vulnerable to a range of safeguarding concerns and that such actions can increase a child's risk of harm, exploitation, poor mental health, serious violence, criminal involvement, and becoming missing from education.

The Group acknowledges that a permanent exclusion should never be viewed solely as a behaviour matter and will take all reasonable steps to identify, assess, and address any underlying safeguarding vulnerabilities affecting the child.

Alternative Provisions

In accordance with KCSIE 2026, where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

Media recordings, audio, image and video (including digital files)

The vast majority of people who take or view images or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect pupils, we will seek their consent and parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications) (please refer to the SSG Taking, Using and Storing of Images of Children Policy).

Use of Reasonable Force

In line with statutory guidance, the Group recognises that there are circumstances in which staff may need to use reasonable force to safeguard pupils and others. Reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing serious disruption that could place other pupils or staff at risk. Any use of force will be proportionate, necessary, and applied for the shortest time possible. Physical force is never used as a form of punishment.

All incidents involving the use of reasonable force are recorded and reported to senior leaders. Incidents will be reviewed to ensure that safeguarding procedures have been followed and that appropriate support is provided to the pupil and staff involved. Particular consideration is given to pupils with SEND, medical needs, or additional vulnerabilities.

The group's approach to the use of reasonable force is set out in more detail in the school Behaviour Management Policies, which staff are expected to understand and follow.

Information Sharing

The Group is committed to have due regard to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the Data protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulations and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Staff are aware that:

- 'Safeguarding' and 'individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data.
- They should refer to Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2024.
- There may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent such as:
    - To gain consent would place the child at risk,
    - by doing so will compromise a criminal investigation,
    - It cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent,
    - or, if by sharing information it will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

There are also times when the Group will not provide pupil's personal data where the serious harm test under legislation is met, (by sharing the information the child may be at further risk). When in doubt the Group will seek legal advice.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Where a pupil leaves the School, the DSL will transfer the child protection file separately from the principal pupil file, securely and as soon as possible. This will be within five days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of a new term. Confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

Incoming safeguarding information will be reviewed promptly by the DSL. The DSL will seek clarification of information that is incomplete or unclear and will ensure that relevant staff are informed and that any necessary safeguarding, pastoral or risk-management arrangements are in place.

Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff

The Group adopts a whole school approach to safeguarding and we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the schools within the Group (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Despite all efforts to recruit safely, there may be occasions when allegations of abuse against children are reported to have been committed by staff, supply staff, practitioners, other outsider organisations and/or volunteers, who work with pupils in our school.

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer or other outsider organisations may have:

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

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (this includes behaviour that may have happened outside an organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk)

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff or staff may have concerns about another staff member. If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Designated Senior Manager (see Key Safeguarding Personnel above), usually the headteacher or the DSL. The Designated Senior Manager, and where appropriate the DSL, on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the local authority designated officer (LADO) within 24 hours and before taking any further action.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Executive Chair of Governors who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying the headteacher first.

The Group will follow the guidance detailed in KCSiE (2026) for managing allegations against staff.

Low level concerns

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

- is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO, examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
    - being over friendly with children
    - having favourites
    - taking photographs of children on their mobile phone outside of the acceptable policies and procedures (please note that **no personal devices are permitted in the vicinity of EYFS pupils**)
    - engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
    - using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

The culture of our schools is such that staff are encouraged to pass on low level concerns to the Designated Senior Manager. These concerns will be recorded and dealt with appropriately (see the relevant Low Level Concerns policies for more information).

Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working in or on behalf of the schools or Group from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Whistleblowing

The Group has a whistleblowing policy which is available as a separate document. We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

The Schools within the Group work hard to encourage a culture of mutual respect and learning. We welcome comments and feedback and provide staff, pupils and parents with a safe mechanism to raise any concerns.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements.

In the first instance this should be raised with the relevant headteacher, the DSL or the chair of governors (please refer to the Whistleblowing policy for more details). If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak to the LADO for further guidance and support.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Training

All staff members and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including induction, which is regularly updated. This includes training on how to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to any concerns. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Staff also receive regular online safety training.

The nominated safeguarding Governor undergoes safeguarding training prior to or as soon as appointment to the role and at every two years thereafter.

The DSLs attend the multi-agency local safeguarding partnership training within 12 weeks of taking up their responsibilities.

The Group ensures that its DSLs attend the Designated Safeguarding Lead training and conferences/ networks/ forums to keep abreast of child protection learning and developments, at least biannually. We ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contracted staff, such as catering staff, are aware of our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure and have received appropriate safeguarding training.

Teaching and Learning

The Group is dedicated to ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse, some SEND children, and those for whom English is not their first language, might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

This includes:

- working within statutory guidance in respect to Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk); and Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) as appropriate
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE), to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety and bullying (personal, social, health and economic education)

- appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to ensure that 'over- blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught about online teaching and safeguarding
- shaping the curriculum to respond to safeguarding incident patterns in the settings identified by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and safeguarding team (e.g. to respond to an increase in bullying incidents)
- providing engagement opportunities with parents and carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum
- providing opportunities for children to inform the curriculum via discussions with the relevant members of staff

Child Protection Overview and Specific Safeguarding Concerns

Recognising Abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children (KCSiE 2026).

There are four categories of abuse.

Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse is a form of abuse that 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 [5]or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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.

[5] Throughout this policy 'parent' refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

- These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, such as in situations of domestic abuse.
- It may involve serious bullying (including online bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

- 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 penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including online).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- We encourage all pupils to report concerns using our reporting systems, which they are all aware of, and to speak to any trusted adult about anything which concerns them to do with themselves or another child.

Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.
- Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
    - provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
    - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
    - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
    - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment,
    - it may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs (definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026).
- Neglect can occur in affluent families, see Engaging Neglectful Parents from Affluent Backgrounds

Indicators of Abuse

Physical signs of abuse could include bruising, bleeding or broken bones, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical abuse is complicated, as children may hide injuries, either because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also difficult for anyone without medical training to determine if injuries are accidental or deliberate. For those reasons it is vital that staff are aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DSL.

Recognising child abuse is not always easy, and it is not the responsibility of staff to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused, or is at significant risk. It the responsibility of staff to report any concerns, however minor or insignificant they may appear – they do not need 'absolute proof' that a child is at risk in order to do this. Staff have a clear responsibility to act if they have a concern about a child's welfare or safety, or if a child talks about (discloses) abuse (see Appendix for more details). They should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. All staff should reassure victims[6] that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Impact of abuse

The sustained abuse or neglect of children physically, emotionally or sexually can have long term effects on the child's health, development and wellbeing. It can impact significantly on a child's self-esteem, self-image and on their perception of self and of others. The effects can extend into adult life and lead to difficulties in forming and sustaining positive and close relationships. In some situations, it can affect parenting ability.

Key Safeguarding Areas

These topics are themes that can impact on children and families, there are specific areas of safeguarding that the setting has statutory responsibilities to address (which are hyperlinked.)

Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)

In accordance with KCSiE (2026), all staff within the Group are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online.

All staff understand that even if there are no reports at their school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

All staff within the Group will challenge inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)

[6] Throughout this policy the term 'victim' is used as it is a widely recognised and understood term. At SSG, we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. SSG staff are conscious of this when managing incidents and are prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.

- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, including those generated using AI (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Child-on-child abuse is not accepted within SSG and will be dealt with as a serious issue.

Aspects of child-on-child abuse can be linked to gender. It is recognised that a significant amount of child-on-child abuse happens between boys and girls, it should be remembered that it can also happen between pupils of the same gender. Homosexual, Bisexual and Transgender pupils are at particular risk of child-on-child abuse. SSG takes a whole-school approach to sustain a culture which does not tolerate any form of prejudice or discrimination.

The Group will seek to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by taking a contextual approach to safeguarding by increasing safety in the contexts of which harm can occur – this can include the school environment itself, peer groups and the neighbourhood. If necessary, a location linked with contextual safeguarding will be reported to Dorset Child and Adolescent Duty (ChAD) service and/or the Police. Where needed it will also be passed onto the DSLs of other local schools.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, who may themselves need support; it is preventable, and staff have a responsibility to report any concerns to the DSL regardless of whether the incident happened on or off site.

Sexual harassment and violence between children can be linked to wider cultures of misogyny; the Group will consider this link when planning its curriculum and pastoral response.

Consequently, child-on-child abuse is dealt with as a safeguarding issue and recorded as such, not managed through the systems set out in the behaviour management policies.

- Any child who may have been victimised and/or displayed such harmful behaviours, along with any other child affected by child-on-child abuse, will be supported through the Group's safeguarding team and pastoral system and the support will be regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Staff will address inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) as this can be an important intervention that may help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.
- We acknowledge that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. Staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by providing:

- a relevant, effective curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation, and the mandatory teaching of Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education,

- established/publicised systems for children to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously,
- training to all staff so they understand that child-on-child abuse can and does happen and are trained to be alert to any behaviours that could cause concern,
- a clear procedure for all staff to report all incidents as a safeguarding concern to the school DSL/ Deputy DSL.

Following any incidents of child-on-child harm, the DSL/DDSLs will review and consider whether any practice or environmental changes can be made in relation to any lessons learned. This can include making changes to staffing and supervision, making changes to the physical environment and considering the utilisation and delivery of safeguarding topics on the curriculum.

Mental Health

Mental health issues affect at least 1 in 10 children and young people and include depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, disordered eating, panic attacks, sleep problems and many other conditions and behaviours. They are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives.

The Group recognises that mental health issues can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation and is aware that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff are, however, well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health issue or be at risk of developing one.

The Group aims to promote positive mental health for all pupils and will utilise and engage with the support, knowledge and services of the Mental Health in Schools Team when there are concerns for the mental health of a child(ren) within the schools.

The Group will also ensure that staff, pupils and parents are made aware of the support available in school and in the local communities.

Useful links:

- Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance
- NSPCC
- Mind
- Kooth

Domestic abuse

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

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- economic
- emotional
- controlling or coercive behaviour

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs.

The Group recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The Group acknowledges that domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

The Group has signed up to the Police initiative Operation Encompass that helps the school to provide support to children. The system seeks to ensure that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the DSL in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up-to-date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable silent support to be given to the child according to their needs.

Under-age sexual activity

Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of consenting partners of a similar age is not usual. The DSL involved will exercise professional judgement when deciding whether to refer such cases to the Police or local authority, taking into account such things as the age of the pupils, imbalance of power, wide difference in ages or developmental stages and the possibility of peer abuse.

Where a child is under the age of 13 penetrative sex is classified as rape under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 so must be reported to social workers in every case.

The inter-agency safeguarding procedures, on the PDSCP website, have more information about under-age sexual activity.

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos by children can be signs that they are at risk. Where a crime has not been committed, and following the Department for Education's guidance to schools, these incidents can be dealt with primarily as a safeguarding matter. See Appendix 6 and Sharing nudes and semi nudes for further details.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Sexual violence and sexual harassment, including that once referred to as 'banter', is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

Staff must challenge unsuitable behaviour. This could include those behaviours described in Appendix 7 as well as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras, lifting up skirts/pulling down trousers, 'downblousing' and 'upskirting'. More information can be found here (Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges, 2021).

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting an issue. They should also never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

There is a legal duty for those taking part in regulated activity to report if they:

- are told that a child (person under the age of 18) has been sexually abused, either by a child or an adult involved
- witness child sexual abuse in person
- see or hear it in the form of images, videos or audio recordings.

These cases must be referred to the DSL who will support staff to carry out their duty. It is also advised any referrals made to the police under the mandatory reporting duty is followed up with children's social care, so an assessment of need and support is concurrently considered.

If staff have a concern about a pupil or a pupil makes a report to them, they should follow the safeguarding referral process as set out in this policy.

Details of how to proceed with an allegation of sexual harassment or sexual violence can be found in Appendix 7 of this policy.

The DSLs will ensure the schools are engaging with Children's Social Care and specialist services as required.

The Group has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and harassment. When an investigation is being led by a school within the group, each incident will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate for the perpetrator/s, as per the relevant Pupil Code of Conduct.

Child Exploitation (including Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking)

The Group recognises that success in learning is one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime.

All staff within the Group have a knowledge and understanding of the exploitation that children and young people are at risk of within the local community, county wide, nationally and online.

Staff receive appropriate training to enable them to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of exploitation and the different signs that a child or young person may be being exploited.

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

- Any member of staff who becomes aware that a pupil is carrying a weapon, has used a weapon, is in possession of a weapon, or has expressed an intention to use a weapon must report this immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL.
- Concerns relating to weapons will be treated as safeguarding concerns and assessed by the DSL in line with the school's child protection procedures.
- The DSL will consider appropriate action, including risk assessment, parental involvement, referrals to children's social care, Early Help, and/or liaison with the police where appropriate.
- The school recognises that possession or use of a weapon may be an indicator of serious violence, child criminal exploitation, gang involvement, or other safeguarding concerns and will respond accordingly.

For more information please see:

- Dorset Child Exploitation Toolkit (pdscp.co.uk)

- Criminal Exploitation and County Lines (pdscp.co.uk)
- Child Trafficking and Modern Slavery (pdscp.co.uk)
- Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners (www.gov.uk)

Online abuse / e-safety (including filtering and monitoring)

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The four broad areas of risk are **online content** (being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material, including misinformation, disinformation, fake news and conspiracy theories), **contact** (being subjected to harmful interaction with others online), **conduct** (personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of/ causes harm) and **commerce** (risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/ or financial scams).

Schools within the Group adopt a whole school approach to online safety, and it is the responsibility of all staff to protect and educate children in their use of technology and identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns to the DSL where appropriate. All staff receive cyber security training, online safety training and clear guidance to enable them to identify children who may be at risk of harm as a result of their or others' use of technology or the internet. This enables staff to intervene in such cases appropriately and to escalate such cases in accordance with the appropriate child protection procedures.

Pupils receive guidance on the safe use of the web (including anti-bullying and youth produced sexual imagery) through the ICT and wellbeing curricula, in assemblies and presentations given by external speakers.

Schools within the Group take steps to reduce the risk of pupils being abused, radicalised or accessing inappropriate material online. This includes having an Internet Filter / Firewall (Watch Guard) and teaching pupils about the safety issues around Internet use via PSHEE. The filtering and monitoring IT systems are reviewed at least annually by the DSL, Director of ICT and the nominated Safeguarding Governor.

Pupils' risk of online abuse is further reduced by restricting their access to smartphones during term time on an age appropriate basis, including being mobile phone free during the working day, as per the Government guidelines, while also being prepared for life beyond school.

Staff understand that some pupils, who have a higher risk profile than others, may need more specific filtering and monitoring of their devices and additional measures. Support can be put in place to safeguard certain pupils who have specific needs. In order to safeguard our pupils, they are educated about staying safe online and preferential use of IT is through the School WiFi.

The Group recognises that artificial intelligence, including generative AI, may present safeguarding, wellbeing, online safety and data protection risks. These include the creation or manipulation of harmful imagery, exposure to inaccurate or age-inappropriate content, inappropriate interactions with AI tools, the misuse of personal information and the use of technology to facilitate grooming, abuse or exploitation.

Any safeguarding or wellbeing concern arising from an AI tool must be reported immediately to the DSL in accordance with this policy. The Group's filtering and monitoring arrangements will take account of AI tools accessible through Group systems. Further requirements relating to approved systems, acceptable use, personal information and the responsibilities of staff and pupils are set out in the relevant Group technology, data protection and acceptable-use policies.

For further information, please see the relevant SSG policies.

Children absent from education

All children , regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

A child who is absent for a persistent or prolonged period of time, or who has an unexplained absence, or who goes missing from an education setting is a potential victim of abuse, neglect and/or a mental health concern. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future.

Should a School within the Group become aware of a pupil's prolonged absence, appropriate measures must be taken to mitigate the risk of the pupil becoming a child absent from education in the future and, if necessary, the relevant external organisations will be contacted in accordance with the Group's Pupil Attendance, Registration & Absence Policy. Each School has a clear missing child policy and staff understand the procedure to follow should a pupil go missing or should a pupil have unauthorised absence.

Each school will notify the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or removed from the admissions register at non-standard transitions and when a pupil is deleted from its register under the grounds set out in the amended Education (Pupil Registration – England) Regulations 2024.

Further guidance can be found in the Missing children and adults strategy (December 2011) and in Children missing education (September 2025).

Homelessness

The Group recognises that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSLs are aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Where the Group receives notification from a local housing authority that a pupil has been placed in temporary accommodation, the DSL or a deputy will consider whether the pupil's welfare, pastoral, educational or safeguarding needs have changed. The DSL will liaise with relevant agencies and coordinate additional support where appropriate.

Children with family members in prison

The Group recognises that children who have a family member in prison are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The school will work with agencies and resources such as NICCO to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Female Genital Mutilation

If a teacher (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England), in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the police via 101. This is a mandatory reporting duty.

For more information please see:

- Female Genital Mutilation (pdscp.co.uk)
- Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage (www.gov.uk)

Online Safety

The Group adopts a whole school approach to online safety, which protects and educates pupils and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

Online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and is considered when planning the curriculum in all subjects.

Children and young people commonly use electronic equipment including mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites such as Facebook, TikTok, X (Formerly Twitter), MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat, Instagram and gaming platforms. Those technologies and the internet are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. Unfortunately, however, some adults and young people will use those technologies to harm children. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access those sites in school. Many pupils own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

The Schools' Online Safety Policies are available on request from the relevant School Office. They explain how we try to keep pupils safe in school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology.

Schools within the Group follow the DfE guidance regarding teaching online safety in schools (2023). Online bullying and sharing nudes and semi-nudes by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures (see 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes' below).

Safeguarding Children with medical conditions

An incident relating to the management of a pupil's medical condition (including allergies – see SSG Allergy Safety Policy for more details) would not, in itself, warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. However, the Group will make a referral to statutory services where an incident indicates the child may be at increased risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation connected to their medical condition – for example, where relevant medical information is not provided to the setting, or a child is repeatedly sent without essential medication.

Further information: DfE statutory guidance Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, and Allergy safety in schools.

Gender-questioning children

The Group has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, including any child who is questioning their gender, as well as their peers, and will consider the impact of any decision on all children affected risk/needs assessments will be considered.

Where a child asks for support with social transition, we will:

- engage parents/carers as a priority and give their views considerable weight, except in the rare circumstances where doing so would place the child at greater risk – in which case the DSL will determine what action is needed to safeguard the child before parents/carers are contacted;

- take a careful approach, recognising that social transition is an active intervention that may have significant effects on a child's wellbeing and longer-term outcomes, and that primary-aged children in particular are very unlikely to be supported in a full social transition;
- consider what is in the best interests of the child and of other children, drawing on clinical and non-clinical professional advice (for example from the SENCo) where relevant, and taking into account any wider health issues or neurodiversity;
- document the decision-making process and keep records, including where a request is not agreed to; ensure that toilets, changing rooms, and boarding/residential accommodation designated for one biological sex are not made available to a child of the other biological sex, including as a form of social transition, in line with Appendix E of this policy; and
- comply with the setting's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, considering whether any policy would place a gender-questioning child at a disadvantage relative to other children, and linking this consideration to the setting's wider inclusion and equality processes (see section 3, Equalities Statement, of this policy).

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. Close relatives are defined as step parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts. It applies to children under the age of 16, or under 18 if the child is disabled.

Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential school, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age. The Group recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well, but safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that a child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Children's Social Care as soon as possible. When a school within the Group becomes aware of a private fostering arrangement for a pupil that has not been notified to Children's Social Care, we will encourage parents and private foster carers to notify Children's Social Care themselves in the first instance, but also alert them to our mandatory duty as a school to inform the local authority of children in such arrangements.

For more information please see:

- Looking after someone else's child

Radicalisation and Extremism

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism is part of the Group's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services ('specified authorities') to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

The Group takes seriously our responsibility to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they will speak with the DSL. Schools within the Group will discuss any concerns about possible radicalisation identified in school with a pupil's parents and carers as with any other safeguarding or child protection issue unless there is reason to believe that doing so would place the child at risk. They will also support parents and carers who raise concerns about their children being vulnerable to radicalisation.

We will then follow normal safeguarding procedures, which may involve contacting the Single Point of Access for consultation and further advice and/or making appropriate referrals to the police PREVENT team and Channel programme for any pupil whose behaviour or comments suggest that they are vulnerable to being radicalised and drawn into extremism and terrorism in order to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

The Department for Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264).

Taking Action

Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here'.

Key points for staff to remember when taking action are:

- in an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child, for example call 999
- report your concern to the DSL as quickly as possible – immediately when there is evidence of physical or sexual abuse and certainly by the end of the day
- where physical injuries have been observed, these should be carefully noted but not photographed. Do not ask to see injuries that are said to be on an intimate part of the child's body.
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern and seek support for yourself if you are distressed or need to debrief
- If any member of staff is concerned about a child, he or she must inform the DSL.

The relevant DSL will decide whether the concerns should be raised to Children's Social Care. If a referral to Children's Social Care is required, the DSL will discuss the referral with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or a criminal offence has been committed.

Whilst it is the DSL's role to make referrals to Children's Social Care, any staff member can make a referral to Children's Social Care and / or the police if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (e.g. concern that a family might have plans to carry out FGM, Forced Marriage etc) and the DSL / DDSL is unavailable (the DSL / DDSL should be informed of the referral(s) made as soon as possible.)

What to do if staff are concerned about a child's welfare

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately. Any concerns regarding indicators of abuse or neglect or signs that a child may be experiencing a

safeguarding issue should be recorded[7] and passed to the DSL or DDSL of the site where the concern arises. For physical signs of abuse, a body map can also be used. Concerns can also be discussed in person with the relevant DSL but the details of the concern should be recorded in writing.

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.

The Group recognises that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.

In these circumstances, staff will exercise professional curiosity and will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way. Staff should then record these early concerns on the school's recording system. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing. If the pupil begins to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a pupil making a disclosure.

Where a member of staff has a safeguarding concern about a child who is not a pupil of the Group, including a sibling of a pupil or a child attending an activity on Group premises, the concern must be reported to the DSL immediately and dealt with in accordance with this policy and applicable local safeguarding procedures.

Responding to concerns reported by parents or others in the community

Occasionally, parents or other people in the local community tell school staff about an incident or accumulation of concerns they have about the family life of a child who is also a pupil at the school.

If the incident or concern relates to child protection, the information cannot be ignored, even if there are suspicions about the motives for making the report. Members of staff will therefore pass the information to the DSL in the usual way.

It is preferable if the parent / community member who witnessed or knows about the concerns or incident makes the report themselves. Contact details for the Dorset Family Support and Advice Line can be found here.

If the parent / community member refuses to make the referral, the DSL will clarify that they have a responsibility to do so and will also need to pass on to the relevant external agency how they are aware of the information.

This process also applies to parents / community members who are also school staff. As professionals who work with children, they cannot be anonymous when making the referral but can ask for the situation to be managed sensitively and, if necessary, for their identity to be withheld from the family if it will cause difficulties in their private life.

Any suspicion or concern that a child or young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, MUST be acted on. Doing nothing is not an option. Any suspicion or concern

[7] In CPOMS for SG, SP and SB, in MyConcern for Hanford and via email for Sherborne International.

must be reported without delay to the DSL or a DDSL. If they are not available, the staff member will discuss their concerns as soon as possible with either

- another senior member of staff or
- the duty worker in the Family Support (Social Care) Team responsible for the area where the child lives. See Useful Contact Details.

What to do if a pupil discloses to a member of staff

Remember the seven Rs: receive; reassure; respond; report; record; remember; review (see Appendix 3).

The Group recognises that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

For some extra help see: NSPCC Responding to a child's disclosure of abuse

During their conversation with the pupil staff will:

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk
- take what the child is disclosing seriously
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong. There are multiple reasons why children delay disclosing
- tell the child what will happen next

If a pupil talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on. Staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible, in the child's own words (not an interpretation of them). Staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should be signed and dated, the member of staff's name should be printed and it should also detail where the disclosure was made and who else was present. For physical signs of abuse, a body map can also be used. The record should be passed on to the DSL.

As soon as the staff member has passed over the details of the disclosure to the DSL or one of the DDSLs; or has, in an emergency, contacted the local authority team, then it is right for them

to assume that their role in the disclosure is over. If a DDSL has had a disclosure referred to them, they will work with the DSL to progress the issue.

Where the pupil already has an allocated social worker that the School is aware of, that person or a manager or duty worker in the same team will be contacted promptly.

If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social workers, they will be asked for their views. It will be explained that whilst their view will be taken into account, the School has a responsibility to take whatever action is required to ensure their safety and that of other children.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

The DSL will take advice from social workers about whether to contact parents at this stage, judging whether do so is likely to place the pupil at risk of harm from their actions or reactions - for example in circumstances where there are concerns that a serious crime such as sexual abuse, domestic violence or induced illness has taken place. If in any doubt, the DSL will call the duty worker first and agree with him/her when parents/carers should be contacted and by whom. The reason for a decision not to contact parents first will be recorded in the pupil's child protection file.

A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous.

Where there is no disclosure by a child, but concerns are accumulating, such as in relation to neglect or emotional abuse, the DSL will ensure that all information is brought together. The DSL will make a professional judgement about whether to refer to outside agencies.

A member of staff who reports concerns to the DSL / a DDSL should expect some feedback, although confidentiality might mean in some cases that this is not detailed. If the member of staff is not happy with the outcome they can press for reconsideration and should also refer the issue to the Head. If, following this, they still believe the correct action has not been taken, they can refer the concern directly to social workers or the NSPCC (NSPCC whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285).

Notifying Parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem or if a criminal offence has been (or potentially been) committed, advice will first be sought from children's services front door service.

Where there are concerns about forced marriage, honour-based abuse or any harmful practice, parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk.

Making a referral to Children's Social Care

Concerns about a pupil or a disclosure should be discussed with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to Children's Services is appropriate. In Dorset this is the Family Support and Advice Line. If a referral is needed, then the DSL should make it. However, anyone, including children, can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can and should consider making a referral themselves.

The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the pupil or if a criminal offence has been (or may have been) committed.

If you have not had any feedback from Children's Social Care within 72 hours of making the referral, you must follow this up. If after a referral the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or whoever made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the pupil's situation improves.

If a pupil is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

PART 3: Child Protection Summary (including EYFS) for all Temporary[8] Staff

As an adult working in a school within the Sherborne Schools Group you have a duty of care towards all pupils within the Group. This means you must act at all times in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare.

You must follow the principles of safer working practice, which includes use of technology – on no account should you take images of pupils on personal equipment, including your mobile phone. **No personal devices including mobile phones are permitted in the vicinity of EYFS (nursery) pupils.**

If the behaviour of another adult in the school gives rise to concern, you must report it to the Head[9]. If the behaviour relates to that of the Head it must be reported to the Chair of Governors who may be contacted via the Clerk to Governors (clerk@sherborneschools.group).

If you have a concern about a pupil within the Group, particularly if you think they may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, it is your responsibility to share the information promptly with the DSL or one of the DDSLs.

The following is not an exhaustive list of safeguarding symptoms, but you might become concerned as a result of:

- seeing a physical injury on a pupil which you believe to be non-accidental
- observing something in the appearance of a pupil which leads you to think their needs are being neglected
- a pupil telling you that they have been subjected to some form of abuse.

In any of these circumstances you must write down what you observed or heard, date and sign the account and give it to the DSL or a DDSL.

If a pupil talks to you about (discloses) sexual or physical abuse you:

- listen carefully without interruption, particularly if they are freely recalling significant events
- only ask sufficient questions to clarify what you have heard. You might not need to ask anything but, if you do, you must not 'lead' the pupil in any way so should only ask 'open' questions
- make it clear you are obliged to pass the information on, but only to those who need to know (pupils are offered the choice of who out of the DSL team will be initially informed)
- tell the DSL or a DDSL without delay
- write an account of the disclosure as soon as you are able (definitely on the same day), date and sign it and give it to the DSL or, in her absence, a DDSL.

Do not ask the pupil to repeat the disclosure to anyone else in school, ask them or any other pupil to write a 'statement' about this disclosure, or inform parents. You are not expected to make a judgement about whether the child is telling the truth. Once you have informed the DSL or DDSL of the disclosure, you can consider your responsibility for dealing with this issue over.

Remember – share any concerns, don't keep them to yourself.

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[8] Temporary staff are those who do not have permanent contracts.

[9] At Sherborne International, report it to the Director of Short Courses.

Appendix 1: Summary of Changes in Issue 2

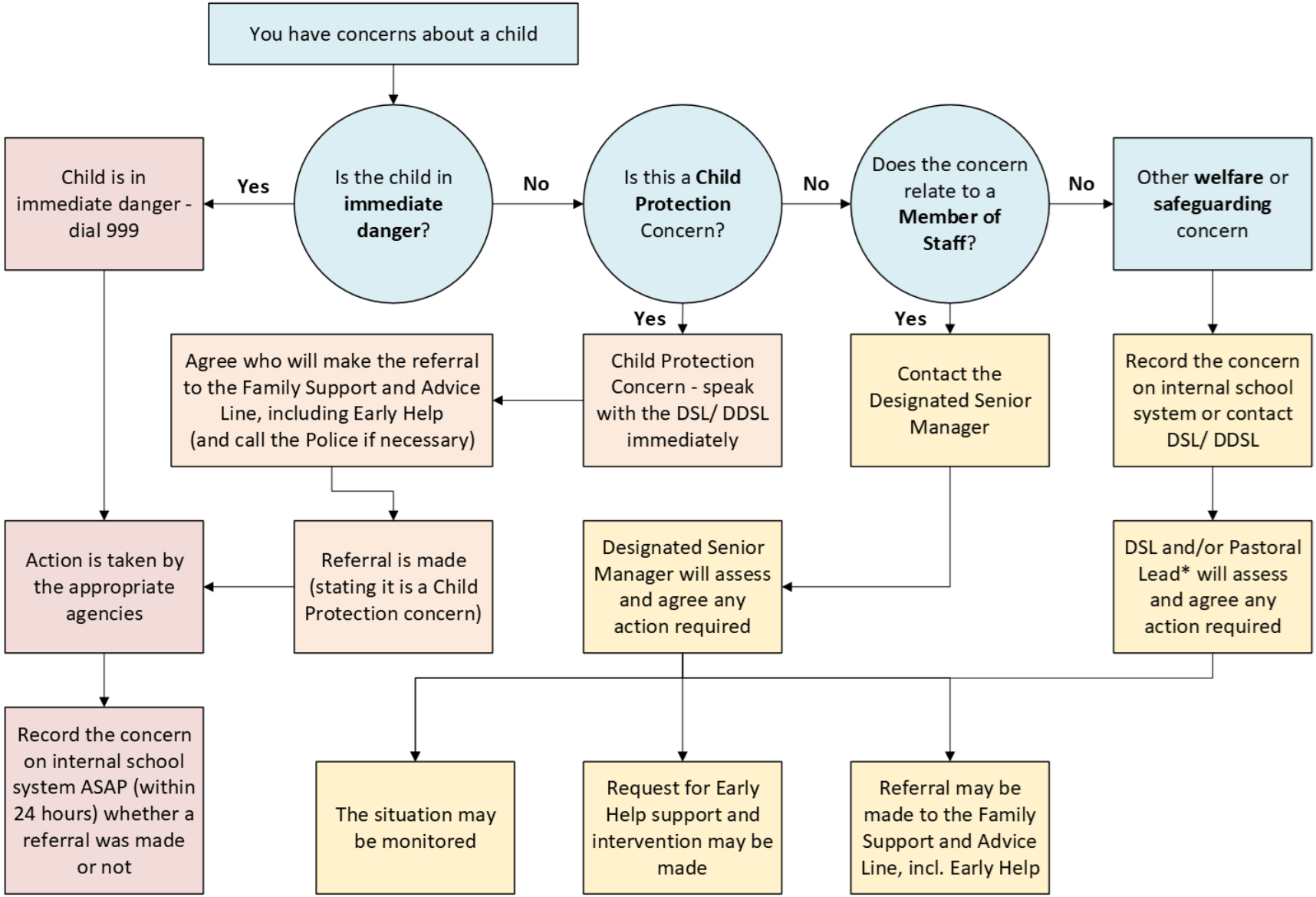
- Minor amendments to terminology and references throughout in line with KCSiE 2026.
- New sections on:
  - Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions
  - Information Sharing
  - Safeguarding children with medical conditions
  - Gender-questioning children
  - Early Years Provision Safeguarding Arrangements
- Additional details added to sections on:
  - Extended School and Offsite Arrangements
  - Alternative Provisions
  - Child-on-Child Abuse
  - Child Exploitation (weapons)
  - Online Abuse/ E-Safety (artificial intelligence)
  - Homelessness
  - Taking Action (legal duty to report on child sexual abuse)

School specific points of reference

Reference in this policy	Variations in terminology/ procedure within the individual schools				**Sherborne International**
	Hanford Prep	**Sherborne Prep**	**Sherborne Girls**	**Sherborne Boys**	
Educational Visits Policy	• Off-site Trips and Activities Policy	• Off-site Trips and Activities Policy	• SSG Senior Schools Offsite Activities Policy	• SSG Senior Schools Offsite Activities Policy	• Offsite Visits Policy
Online Safety Policy	• E-Safety Policy	• E-Safety and Use of Technology Policy	• Online Safety Policy	• SSG ICT Acceptable Use Policy	• SSG ICT Acceptable Use Policy
Low Level Concerns Policy	• Low Level Concerns Policy	• SSG Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	• Low Level Concerns Policy	• SSG Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy	• SSG Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Alcohol Policy	• Responses to alcohol, smoking and substance abuse	• Search Protocol including alcohol and substance abuse	• Alcohol Policy	• Alcohol Policy	• Alcohol Policy
Supervision of Pupils Policy	• Supervision of Pupils Policy and Missing Pupil Procedure	• Supervision of pupils and missing pupil policy (inc EYFS),	• Supervision of Pupils Policy and Missing Pupil Procedure	• Supervision Policy	• School Supervision Policy
Pupil Code of Conduct	• Pupil Code of Conduct	• Pupils Code of Conduct	• Pupil Code of Conduct	• Behaviour Management Policy	• Behaviour Management Policy
Missing Child Policy	• Missing Child Policy	• Supervision of pupils and missing pupil policy (inc EYFS)	• Supervision of Pupils Policy and Missing Pupil Procedure	• Missing Pupil Procedure	• Missing Pupil Procedure
Pastoral Lead	• Assistant Head Pastoral	• Deputy Head Pastoral	• Senior Deputy Head	• Deputy Head Pastoral	• Director of Short Courses
Behaviour Management Policy	• Discipline, Behaviour and Exclusion Policy	• Behaviour Management and Discipline, including Sanctions and Rewards Policy	• Pupil Behaviour, Reward and Sanctions Policy	• Behaviour Management Policy	• Behaviour Management Policy

SHERBORNE SCHOOLS GROUP

Appendix 2: Actions following concerns about a child



* at SG this is the Senior Deputy Head, at SB this is the Deputy Head Pastoral, at SP this is the Deputy Head Pastoral, at HP this is the Head of Boarding

Appendix 3: Responding to a Disclosure.

Please remember the following if a pupil should approach you with a problem:

Receive

Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is said and take it seriously. Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable.

Reassure

Reassure the pupil as far as is honest and reliable (e.g. “I believe you”, “I am sorry this happened”, or “I’m glad you came to me”). Do not make promises you may not be able to keep (e.g. “I won’t tell anyone”, or “everything will be alright now”).

Respond

Respond only as far as is necessary to establish whether you need to refer the matter. Avoid asking leading questions (instead you could say – “Tell me…” “Explain…” “Describe…”).

Report

Share concerns with the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible. If a child is at risk of immediate harm you must contact the Police. Do not keep information to yourself; if in doubt, speak to the DSL or DDSL.

Record

If possible, make some very brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible using the child’s own words, what was said or seen (including any visible marks, bruising or injuries) and the time and location of the abuse and the disclosure. Record facts and observations rather than your own interpretation or assumptions. Sign and date your record and keep your original notes on file.

Remember

Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available. Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues.

Try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

Always remember, “It could happen here.”

Don’t think - “What if I am wrong?”

Think - “What if I am right?”

Appendix 4: Possible Indicators of Abuse

The following information is not designed to turn school staff into experts, but it will help them to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

The examples below are not meant to form an exhaustive list; DSLs and other staff will find it helpful to refer to the inter-agency safeguarding procedures on the Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) website for more detailed information.

Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of the body, like elbows, knees and shins. Some children, however, will have bruising which is less likely to have been caused accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained, or the explanation does not fit the injury or there are differing explanations. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children with different skin tones or from different ethnic groups and specialist advice may need to be taken.

Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse can include:

- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- bruises that are seen away from bony prominences
- bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands
- multiple bruises in clusters
- multiple bruises of uniform shape
- bruises that carry the imprint of an implement used, hand marks, fingertips or a belt buckle

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child who has unexplained signs of pain or illness must be seen promptly by a doctor.

Other physical signs of abuse can include:

- cigarette burns
- adult bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- missing school
- running away from home

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children who appear otherwise well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Children who live in households where there is domestic violence often suffer emotional abuse. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children.

The physical signs of emotional abuse can include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from parents' care
- sudden speech disorders
- developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour, e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- self-harm
- fear of parents being approached

Sexual Abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour which may cause concern, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to, taken seriously and appropriate action taken promptly.

The physical signs of sexual abuse can include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal areas
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse can include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- missing school
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts

- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- alcohol / substance / drug use
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults or other children

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children and young people.

The physical signs of neglect can include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect can include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

It is important that adults in school recognise that providing compensatory care might address the immediate and presenting issue but could cover up or inhibit the recognition of neglect in all aspects of a child's life. Compensatory care is defined as 'providing a child or young person, on a regular basis, help or assistance with basic needs with the aim of redressing deficits in parental care'. This might involve, for example, providing each day a substitute set of clothing because those from home are dirty, or showering a child whose personal hygiene or presentation is such that it is affecting his/her interaction with peers. It does not include isolated or irregular support such as giving lunch money or washing a child who has had an 'accident'. If any adult in school finds s/he is regularly attending to one or more aspects of a child's basic needs, then this will prompt a discussion with the DSL.

The general rule is: the younger the child, the higher the risk in terms of their immediate health. However, serious neglect of older children and adolescents is often overlooked, on the assumption that they have the ability to care for themselves and have made a 'choice' to neglect themselves. Lack of engagement with services should be seen as a potential indicator of neglect.

School staff should be mindful of the above and discuss any concerns with the DSL who will take the appropriate action in accordance with the inter-agency neglect guidance on the DSCP website.

Appendix 5: Response from Children's Services to a school referral

This guidance is intended for DSLs and DDSLs.

Referral

Once a referral is received by the relevant team, a manager will decide on the next course of action within one working day. When there is concern that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, this will be decided more quickly, and a strategy discussion held with the Police and Health professionals (section 47 Children Act 1989).

The DSL should be told within three working days of the outcome of the referral. If this does not happen s/he will contact the duty worker again. If s/he disagrees with the decisions made by social workers or the outcome of the referral, the matter can be raised under the escalation policy (available on the PDSCP website).

Assessment

All assessments should be planned and co-ordinated by qualified social worker. They should be holistic, involving other professionals, parents/carers and the children themselves as far as practicable. Assessments should show analysis, be focused on outcomes and usually take no longer than 45 working days. School staff have a responsibility to contribute to the assessment.

S47 Enquiries (regarding significant harm)

The process of the investigation is determined by the needs of the case, but the child/young person will always be seen as part of that process. On occasions, this will mean the child/young person is jointly interviewed by the Police and social workers, sometimes at a special suite where a videorecording of the interview is made.

S17 Enquiries (Child in Need)

If it is decided that a child is in need of support from professionals but is not at risk of immediate harm, then they may be made subject to a Child in Need plan. The child/young person is always seen as central to that process.

The Child Protection Conference

If, following the Section 47 enquiry, the concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Conference (CPC) will normally be convened. The CPC must be held within 15 days of the first strategy discussion and school staff will be invited to attend - normally the Head or DSL. This person will produce a written report in the correct format (a pro forma is available on the PDSCP website). This will be shared with the child/young person and his/her family before the conference is held. A copy will also be sent to the person chairing the initial CPC at least 24 hours in advance.

More information is in the inter-agency safeguarding procedures ('Child Protection Conferences') on the PDSCP website.

Appendix 6: Response to Incidents Involving Youth Produced Sexual Imagery

This guidance is produced in accordance with the UKCIS guidance on Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident . This document should be referred to when dealing with an individual case.

Youth produced sexual imagery or 'nudes' as it is commonly called is a concerning problem and should be treated as a Safeguarding issue. The production of nude/semi nude/deep-fake sexual and/or pornographic images through the use of AI or other computer generated imagery, is perceived in the same way as if the images were real, both by SSG and by the law.

Youth produced sexual imagery is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps, forums or involve sharing between devices using offline services. It could also involve sharing between devices via services such as 'AirDrop'. It does NOT apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of young people under 18. This is a form of Sexual abuse and will be treated as such.

The response of SSG in dealing with youth produced sexual imagery is to be supportive of the victim and ensuring that the matter will be treated with the utmost importance and sensitivity.

What to do if an issue involving sexual imagery is suspected

- The issue must be referred to the DSL as soon as possible. If the DSL is unavailable the issue should be referred to one of the DDSLs
- If possible, any relevant devices should be handed to the DSL / DDSL. The DSL / DDSL ensures that devices are locked away for the duration of the investigation and may need to hand them over to the Police depending on the outcome of the issue. The reporting member of staff should not view the images or delete them. The pupil should not be asked to delete them
- The DSL / DDSL will hold an initial meeting that includes but is not limited to themselves, the teacher who originally discovered the issue and the relevant HM
- The DSL / DDSL will speak to the pupil(s) concerned with the HM present. If the HM is not available, the relevant AHM or a House tutor would be a suitable alternative. The DSL / DDSL will reassure the pupil that they are not alone and that they will be supported. The conversation will remain solution-focused and avoid victim-blaming. The issue of consent within healthy relationships will also be discussed
- Parents should be informed at an early stage unless there is good reason to believe that this would put the pupil at risk of harm
- In discussion with the Head and/or Senior Deputy Head, the DSL / DDSL will decide what to do and will liaise with all the relevant parties. All discussions and decisions should be based on the best interests of the pupil

Information to establish

- Whether there is an immediate risk to the pupil
- Defining the incident using Finkelhor and Wolak's typology (aggravated or experimental)
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what platforms
- Whether immediate action has been taken to remove the imagery from devices or online services

- Any other relevant facts about the pupil involved which would influence any decisions
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual

Viewing the image

In most cases, images should not be viewed. If the image has been viewed by accident, this will be reported to the DSL. When the DSL is unavailable the report should be made to a DDSL.

However, there may be cases where it is necessary to view the image/s. The decision to do so should be made by the Head, Senior Deputy Head and the DSL. It is acceptable for only two of these people to make the decision if needed.

If images are viewed intentionally, as stated in the paragraph directly above, the following procedure must be followed:

- The image should be viewed on a screen. It should not be printed, copied or shared as this is illegal
- The viewing should happen in the presence of a second member of the Senior Leadership team. This second person does not need to view the image
- The image should be viewed on the school site in a location where there is no risk of another person viewing the image accidently. Ideally this would be in the office of a member of the Senior Leadership team
- The viewing of the image should be recorded in the Safeguarding records. Records should include who was present, why the image(s) was viewed and any subsequent actions. The form should be signed and dated by all present
- If the image is unavoidably viewed by a member of staff as a result of either a disclosure from a pupil or through undertaking their daily role, the DSL is responsible for ensuring that the member of staff is appropriately supported as this can be distressing. Appropriate emotional support may be required and must be offered

Deleting the imagery

Whether the image is deleted by the School will depend on the outcome of the incident however a general guide is:

- If the incident is passed on to the Police or Dorset Safeguarding, then the imagery should not be deleted. If this is the case, then the device will be disconnected from the Internet to prevent images being deleted remotely
- If the incident is dealt with by the School, then the image will be deleted wherever possible. If this is the case, any pupil who has the image on their device will be asked to delete the image/s and then confirm to the DSL that they have done this

Response

The DSL/ Senior Deputy Head in discussion with the Head will decide how to respond. It should be dealt with primarily as a Safeguarding issue but may also become a disciplinary issue if there is evidence that either the images were taken without permission, or the images had been shared without permission.

Police and/or Dorset Safeguarding guidance must be sought if the image fulfils one or more of the following criteria:

- If the image was made or shared by an adult
- If there is reason to believe that the young person or people have been coerced, blackmailed or groomed

- If there were any concerns over the person's ability to consent i.e. for Special Educational Needs reasons, or due to intoxication
- If there is reason to believe that the image involves sexual acts involving violence or that are unusual for the young person's developmental stage
- If there is reason to believe that the image is of a sexual act and involves any person under 13
- If there is any reason to believe that the image was shared without consent and with malice
- If there is any reason that a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery e.g. the young person involved is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

Pupils should be asked and encouraged to remove sexual images from devices and/or social media for which they have control.

The Internet Watch Foundation should be contacted to see if it is possible to get the image removed if it has been shared more widely.

It is possible to report inappropriate use to most social media sites and the DSL can advise how to do this.

Supporting parents/guardians/carers

Parents/guardians/carers will be:

- given information about the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, what they can expect to happen next, and who will be their link person within the education setting
- given support to deal with their own feelings of upset and concern including signposting to further resources that can help them to understand the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes or support services they can contact, where appropriate
- given support on how to speak to their child about the incident
- advised on the law around the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
- kept updated about any actions that have been taken or any support that their child is accessing, unless the child involved has specifically asked for this not to happen and is judged to be old enough and sufficiently capable to make that informed decision
- informed about sources of support for their child, in case they are feeling anxious or depressed about what has happened. This could include speaking to a Childline counsellor online or on 0800 11 11, in house counselling services where available, or a GP. If they are concerned that their child is suicidal, they should contact 999
- directed to NCA-CEOP if their child or young person discloses any further details to them that may suggest they are being groomed or sexually exploited

Useful Contacts

- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- CEOPS ThinkUKnow: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Appendix 7: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence are sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 refer to:

- Rape: Intentional penetration of the vagina, mouth or anus by a penis without consent (and the perpetrator does not believe they have consent).
- Assault by Penetration: Intentional penetration of the vagina or anus by a part of the body or something else for sexual purposes without consent (and the perpetrator does not believe they have consent).
- Sexual Assault: Intentional touching of a sexual nature where the victim does not consent, and the perpetrator does not believe they have consent.

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent may be given for some sexual acts but not others. Consent can be withdrawn at any time.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It can occur online and offline. 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.

Sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments
- sexual 'jokes' or taunting including sexual 'banter'
- physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes or displaying images of a sexual nature
- on-line sexual harassment
- 'Upskirting' (taking a photograph or image 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)
- 'Downblousing' (taking a photograph or image down a person's shirt, blouse or top without their consent.)

Sexual harassment is not tolerated within the Sherborne Schools Group. Please see the SSG Sexual Harassment Policy for more information.

Response to an allegation of Sexual Harassment or Sexual Violence

It is important to note that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children may show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report e.g. a friend may make a report, or a member of school staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed, or a child's own behaviour may indicate that something is wrong.

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

Following an allegation, the DSL (or a DDSL) will be involved in the decision in how to proceed. Each case will be taken on a case-by-case basis with the wishes of the victim's wishes taken into account wherever practicable. Other considerations will be the nature of the alleged

incident, whether a crime has been committed, the ages of the children involved, the developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance between the children, is the alleged incident a one-off or a sustained pattern, are there ongoing risks to the victim or other child or adults within the school, other related issues. Careful thought should also be made to how and when the alleged perpetrator is going to be told of the allegations.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL / DDSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. This may also be considered for cases of sexual harassment.

The risk and needs assessment should consider the protection and support of the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and other children (and adults if appropriate) within the school. Risk assessments should be recorded and be kept under review.

There are four likely scenarios of how sexual violence and/or sexual harassment will be managed:

- Report to the Police: This will in general also be accompanied by a referral to Social Care. It should be used in all cases of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. It is important that the DSL liaise closely with the Police to ensure that any disciplinary measures or support does not jeopardise a Police investigation.
- Referral to Children's Social Care: This should be used when a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.
- Family Help: Useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.
- Manage Internally: Following taking advice from Dorset Safeguarding.

When referring to children's social services or the Police, parents or carers will usually be told unless telling them puts a child at risk of harm.

At all times the response will be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. It is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded and kept as part of a safeguarding file.

The DSL / DDSL will not wait for the outcome of a Social Care or Police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children in the school.

The victim and alleged perpetrator will require on-going support. Substantial details of this can be found in Part 5 of KCSiE. Victims may not talk about the whole picture immediately. They may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. When it is clear that ongoing support will be required, the victim will be asked if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult (for example, their tutor, HM or the DSL) to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's (as far as reasonably possible).

The victim will not be isolated although there may be times when they will feel unable to attend particular lessons or other activities. This will be supported by the School and will be because the victim wants to, not because it makes it easier for the School to deal with the situation.

If the victim decides that they wish to move schools, then the DSL will be responsible for passing on details of any support needs.

Support of the perpetrator will also be considered. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and may have unmet needs as well as posing a risk to other children. Advice will be taken as appropriate from Children's Social Care, specialist sexual violence services and the Police where relevant.

If the alleged perpetrator moves to another school, the DSL will be responsible for passing on any support needs and any potential risks to other children and staff.

If a report or allegation provided by a pupil is subsequently found to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per the relevant Pupil Code of Conduct and/or Behaviour Management policy.

Appendix 8: Prevent within schools

Identifying pupils at risk of radicalisation

There is no single way of identifying who is likely to be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. The lists of indicators given below are not exhaustive and all or none may be present in individual cases of concern. There is a complex relationship between the various aspects of an individual's identity which determines their vulnerability to extremism and oversimplified assessments have consistently been demonstrated to increase victimisation, fail to identify vulnerabilities and, in some cases, increase the ability of extremists to exploit, operate and recruit.

Examples of influences that make individuals susceptible to engagement with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:

- a feeling of grievance and or injustice
- feeling under threat
- a need for identity, meaning and belonging
- a desire for status
- a desire for excitement and adventure
- a need to dominate and control others
- susceptibility to indoctrination
- a desire for political or moral change
- opportunistic involvement
- family or friends' involvement in extremism
- being at a transitional time of life
- being influenced or controlled by a group
- relevant mental health issues
- identity crisis – distance from cultural or religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them
- personal crisis – family tension, sense of isolation, adolescence, low self-esteem, disassociating from existing friendship groups and becoming involved with new and different groups of friends, searching for answers about questions about identity, faith and belonging
- personal circumstances – migration, local community tensions, events affecting country or region of origin, alienation from UK values, having a sense of grievance which is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of government policy
- unmet aspirations

Example indicators that an individual is engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:

- spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far-right groups)
- attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology

Intent to cause harm

Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm, so this dimension is considered separately. Intent factors describe the mindset that is associated with a readiness to use violence and address what the individual would do and to what end. They can include:

- over-identification with a group or ideology
- 'them and us' thinking
- dehumanization of those they consider the enemy
- attitudes that justify offending
- harmful means to an end
- harmful objectives

Example indicators that an individual has an intention to use violence or other illegal means include:

- identifying other groups as threatening in what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills
- using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group
- speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now
- expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology
- condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others
- plotting or conspiring with others

Capability to cause harm

Not all those who have a wish to cause harm on behalf of a group, cause or ideology are capable of doing so, and plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What the individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration when assessing risk of harm to the public.

Example indicators that an individual is capable of directly or indirectly causing harm include:

- having a history of violence
- being criminally versatile and using criminal networks to support extremist goals
- having occupational skills that can enable acts of terrorism (such as civil engineering, pharmacology or construction)
- having technical expertise that can be deployed (e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training or survival skills).

Appendix 9: When to Call the Police

It is recognised that involving the Police in incidents can feel a big step, but it should be remembered that the Police can give advice as well and will usually ask the victim about their wishes in how to proceed.

In an emergency where there is either danger to life or a crime is currently being committed, 999 will be called. In all other situations, the Police will be contacted using the 101 service.

The Dorset Safer Schools and Communities team can also be contacted on ssct@dorset.pnn.Police.uk .

If the Police are to be involved due to a Safeguarding issue, then as recommended in the NPCC guidance 'When to call the Police', the single point of contact will be the DSL. In her absence, one of the DDSL's will be the single point of contact and will remain so for that case.

If it is decided to contact the Police, then the following steps must be taken:

- The School's investigation of the incident must cease
- All investigation paperwork must be collected together and made available in case the Police wish to see it. This should, where possible, include any questions asked of the pupil and their response
- The investigation up to that point should be entered into CPOMS in a timely manner and where possible scanned copies of original notes should be added
- Any reference numbers given by the Police must be added into the incident report in CPOMS as well as the name and badge number of any investigating member of the Police

Involving the Police will be considered for:

- all incidents involving drugs
- sexual harassment
- online bullying
- theft (both on and off School site)

The Police will always be informed about incidents involving:

- sexual violence
- hate crimes

If the Police are involved then the victim will always be informed and where known, the alleged perpetrator will be told. Where able, the parents of both the victim and alleged perpetrator will also be informed.

More information can be found in the NPCC (National Police Chiefs Council) guidelines 'When to Call the Police'.

Appendix 10: Additional Useful Links

PDSCP / Dorset Council

- PDSCP Resources
- Dorset Council – Worried About a Child
- PDSCP Continuum of Need
- Allegations Against Staff

Mental Health

- Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance
- NSPCC: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/
- Mind: https://www.mind.org.uk/
- Kooth: https://www.kooth.com/
- Papyrus: https://www.papyrus-uk.org/suicide-prevention/

Child on Child Abuse

- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE September 2021)
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding

- Beyond Referrals Toolkit
- Stop it Now
- Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and Guide
- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)
- CEOP's Thinkuknow website www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines

FGM / Modern Slavery / Prevent / Forced Marriage

- New Definition of Extremism
- Female Genital Mutilation Statutory Guidance
- Guidance Forced Marriage
- Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims
- Protecting Children from Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty
- Educate Against Hate: Educate against hate

Online Safety

- National Cyber Security Centre: National Cyber Security Centre
- The UK safer Internet Centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk)

Legislation

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002

Statutory Guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused
- Guidance for safer working practice 2023
- Restrictive Interventions, including the use of Reasonable force in schools 2026
- Statutory guidance for alternative provision
- Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher
- Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance
- Preventing youth violence and gang involvement
- RCPCH updated guidance on fabricated or induced illness
- Children who run away or go missing from home or care
- Positive environments where children can flourish
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills
- Teachers' Standards
- Information Sharing
- Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage
- Working together to improve school attendance