St Joseph
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Effective from September 2026)

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Michael Bate Amy Fidler Andrew Truby	Education Committee	21/09/2026	5.1	September 2027

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Abstract	
This policy reflects the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures across the Trust.	

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For the purpose of this policy the following representatives need to sign off this document:	
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Website:	
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1. Overview

This document is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for St Joseph Catholic Multi Academy Trust, which will be followed and adhered to by all members of the Trust, supply staff, contractors and visitors. It should be promoted by those in positions of leadership within the organisation and available and accessible to our whole community.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 states that governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

This Trust safeguarding and child protection policy must:

- reflect the whole Trust/college approach to child-on-child abuse;
- reflect reporting systems.
- describe procedures which are in accordance with government guidance.
- refer to locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the safeguarding partners.
- include policies such as online safety and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- where appropriate, reflects serious violence.
- be reviewed annually (as a minimum) and updated if needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt; and
- be available publicly either via the Trust website or by other means.

This policy has been produced to fulfil those duties and to ensure that staff are aware of our processes and practices and can act effectively in all the situations that they may find themselves in, at all times acting in the best interests of the child, to safeguard them.

Linked policies:

- Pupil behaviour policy.
- Staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct).
- Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- Educational visits policy.
- Child on Child abuse and harassment policy.

- Attendance policy.
- Search, screening and confiscation policy.
- Use of force, restraint and positive handling policy.
- Low-level concerns
- Allegations against staff

Relevant statutory guidance and legislation (as a minimum). See DfE and KCSIE 2026 for a complete list.

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)
- The Prevent Duty – Departmental Advice for Schools and Childcare Providers (latest version)
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for Practitioners - 2015
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: Procedural Information (latest version)
- Children Missing Education (2025)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners (May 2024)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (July 2022)
- Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People (March 2024)
- Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher (February 2018)
- Promoting the Education of Children with a Social Worker, Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children (February 2018)
- Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)
- Teachers' Standards (December 2021)
- Education Act 2002
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (June 2026)

Additionally, all associated child protection and safeguarding legislation referenced in this policy and other relevant national guidance linked to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Schools, colleges and children's services : Safeguarding children - detailed information - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

2. Our expectations in relation to safeguarding and child protection at SJCMAT

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child.

Trust staff are particularly important, as they are able to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.

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

All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

All staff should be able to reassure victims 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 abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility!

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. In line with this requirement, St Joseph Multi Academy Trust has systems in place which are designed to:

- prevent unsuitable people working with or coming into contact with pupils within school.
- promote safe practice and challenge poor or unsafe practice.
- identify pupils who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and take appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at school.
- identify pupils who may be susceptible to messages of violence and radicalisation and take appropriate action to ensure early intervention challenges extreme ideologies.
- contribute to effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for pupils.

The Trust is responsible for the review and scrutiny of this policy and other associated policies and giving feedback on these to the Trust Board. The Trust Board appoints a lead trustee for safeguarding.

The lead trustee for safeguarding takes on three main sets of duties related to safeguarding in addition to their wider responsibilities as a trustee, as listed below:

Strategic

- Consider the organisation's strategic plans and make sure they reflect safeguarding legislation, regulations specific to your activities, statutory guidance, and the safeguarding expectations.
- Work with the CEO and designated safeguarding lead regularly to review whether the things the organisation has put in place are creating a safer culture and keeping people safe.
- Check the organisation's risk register reflects safeguarding risks properly and plans sensible measures to take, including relevant insurance for trustees' liability.
- be ready for inspections and respond appropriately to any external reports.
- Ensure that there is space on the agenda for safeguarding reports and challenge those reports.

Effective policy and practice

- Make sure there is an annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures and that this is reported to trustees.

- Understand the monitoring to see whether policies and procedures are effective.
- Call for audits of qualitative and quantitative data (either internal or external) when they're needed.
- Learn from case reviews locally and nationally, to improve your organisation's policies, procedures and practices.
- Oversee safeguarding allegations against staff or volunteers, together with CEO and designated safeguarding lead.
- Be a point of contact for staff or volunteers if someone wishes to complain about a lack of action in relation to safeguarding concerns.

Creating the right culture

- Champion safeguarding throughout the organisation.
- Attend relevant safeguarding training events and conferences.
- Support the trustees in developing their individual and collective understanding of safeguarding.
- Attend meetings, activities, projects to engage with staff, volunteers and beneficiaries to understand safeguarding on the ground.
- Work with the chair, CEO, designated safeguarding lead and communications team in order to manage all serious safeguarding cases.
- Support regular safeguarding updates for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.
- Ensure the CMAT gathers the views of staff and volunteers in relation to safeguarding and sharing these with the Trust Board.

We have a child-centred and child-focused approach to safeguarding and everything that we do. We always maintain that "it could happen here, and we have an ongoing culture of vigilance in all our settings."

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is found in the Equality Act. Compliance with the PSED is a legal requirement for state-funded schools and colleges

The PSED places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, specific consideration must be given to the equality implications

of these such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism.

The Chief Executive Officer and the Headteacher of each Academy will ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable designated persons and other staff to discharge their responsibilities
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle blowing policies.

The Senior Trust Leader with Designated Responsibility for Child Protection will be known as the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead (TDSL) and ensure that:

- Cases of suspected abuse or allegations are referred to the relevant investigating agencies.
- They act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the Trust and individual educational establishments for all stakeholders.
- They work with the Headteachers of the individual Academies to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure that there is always cover for the DSL role within each Academy.
- That each Academy uses Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex B as the template for the job description and role of the DSL and DDSL.

Raising Awareness

- The CEO and Trust Board will ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually and that the Trust Board consults with Local Governing Bodies regarding this.
- All parties will ensure that parents are made aware of the Trust child protection and safeguarding policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the individual establishments in this to avoid conflict later.
- The DSL of each Academy will ensure that when a child leaves the Trust, the child protection file is copied for the new establishment ASAP, and within 5 days, and transferred to the new school separately from the main pupil file. If a child goes missing or leaves to be educated at home, then the child protection file should be copied, and the copy forwarded to the appropriate Children's Services.
- The DSL of each Academy will ensure that when a child joins the Trust, the child protection file is actively obtained, no later than 5 days after joining the Trust.

All staff and volunteers will:

- Fully comply with the Trust's policies and procedures.
- Attend appropriate training relevant to the role that they hold. Basic awareness training is required for all staff and volunteers within 3 weeks of commencement of role. This must be updated annually. All staff with access to children's safeguarding files, must hold the relevant DSL training.
- Inform the designated person(s) of any concerns.
- Always wear their ID pass whilst on Trust premises.

4. The role of the Trust and the local governing body of each Academy

The Trust and each Academy's local governing body will ensure that a whole-school approach is taken to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of Academy life and ultimately, all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. This includes a standing item on the local governing body agenda. Where there is a safeguarding concern, the school's local governing body and school leaders will ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback.

All governors and trustees should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated and appropriate to their role. This may be delivered virtually, face-to-face or by any other means as approved by the CEO of the Trust.

Headteachers should ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by their governing body (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood and followed by staff.

The Trust and local governing bodies should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

According to the Equality Act, schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

The Trust and each local governing body will:

- monitor the Trust's and each Academy's compliance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and ensure that it is provided to and read by all staff – including temporary staff and volunteers on induction.
- ensure that all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the appropriate annexes, following the removal of the shorter Annex A summary.
- have a lead person for safeguarding and child protection on the local governing body and Trust Board who liaises with the Headteacher and designated safeguarding lead (DSL) on these matters.
- ensure that each Academy contributes to inter-agency working in line with the statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children (2026) including providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs are identified, contributing to interagency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans and allowing the local authority to conduct a section 17 or section 47 assessment.
- recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018.
- ensure that Academy systems and procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Safeguarding Partners.
- verify that the Trust and each Academy operates safer recruitment procedures and fulfils its statutory duty to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers at the school.
- ensure that the Trust and each Academy has clear steps for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers that comply with locally agreed guidance and Keeping children safe in education (2026).
- ensure that the Trust and each Academy has clear steps for dealing with low level concerns raised against members of staff and volunteers that comply with locally agreed guidance and Keeping children safe in education (2026).
- ensure the Staff Code of Conduct is upheld and provided to all staff including temporary members of staff.
- ensure that a senior leader(s) (designated safeguarding lead) in the Trust and each Academy is designated with lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues who will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and liaise closely

with other services such as children's social care and where appropriate channel co-ordinators/police practitioners.

- ensure that the designated safeguarding lead(s) within the Trust and each Academy take part in regular training from relevant agencies including local Safeguarding Partners.
- ensure that a senior leader in each Academy is designated to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and previously looked after by the local authority and to ensure that this person has appropriate training.
- ensure the Trust and each Academy, in the exercise of its function, fulfils its duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".
- ensure that the designated safeguarding lead(s) receives regular training from appropriate agencies with regard to the Prevent agenda and raising awareness and vigilance to reduce extremism and protect vulnerable people from radicalisation.
- ensure there are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned (this is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria is met is a criminal offence).
- ensure all staff receive induction training, regular updates on child protection issues and annual safeguarding training on child protection issues.
- ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe through provision of training on child protection issues.
- ensure appropriate safeguarding procedures and responses are in place for children who go missing in education.
- ensure there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.
- ensure there is a clear accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of the services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- ensure Trust staff fulfil their statutory duty to report to the Police any discovery that female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- Where services or activities are provided on the Trust premises by another body, ensure the body concerned has the appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and liaises with the school on these matters where appropriate.
- ensure the Trust considers how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through personal, social and health education (PSHE), and/or through relationship, sex and health education (RSHE).

- ensure the Trust and each Academy has appropriate filters and monitoring in place to ensure children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.
- Ensure that there are appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- ensure all systems within the Trust and each Academy have the child's best interest at heart.

5. Role of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide and maintain a safe environment in which to learn.

All staff have a responsibility to identify children who may benefit from early help, who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm or who express extremist ideologies and are thus vulnerable to radicalisation and to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

The DSL has a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so.
- During term time, be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. **NB:** Individual schools, working with the DSL, define what "available" means and whether, in exceptional circumstances, availability via phone, videocall, or other media is an acceptable substitution for in-person availability.
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Refer cases:
  - To Children's Social Care Services (CSCS) where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals to CSCS.
  - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.

  - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
  - To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidance.

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the headteacher to inform them of issues, especially regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaise with the deputy DSLs to ensure effective safeguarding outcomes.
- Liaise with the case manager and the LA designated officers (LADOs) for child protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.
- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
  - Ensuring that the school knows which pupils have or had a social worker.
  - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these pupils.
  - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these pupils.
  - Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these pupils reach their potential.
  - Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these pupils are experiencing with teachers and the SLT.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.

- Ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures – this will be discussed during the staff induction process.
- Work with the Trust Board to ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, and parents are aware that the school may make referrals for suspected cases of abuse or neglect, as well as the role the school plays in these referrals.
- Link with safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure that staff are aware of the training opportunities available and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Undergo training, and update this training at least every two years.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings; this includes understanding the difficulties pupils may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and considering how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication.
- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters: specifically, to ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and to support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, including within school, with other schools, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

The designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC, and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. All staff are expected to:

- read Part 1 of the DfE guidance document Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and any role-relevant annexes or local safeguarding updates provided by the Trust.

- be aware of systems within the school which support safeguarding (e.g., Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Staff Code of Conduct, identity and role of the designated safeguarding lead) and how to report safeguarding concerns, be aware of the early help process and understand their role in it, including liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information and in some cases acting as the lead professional.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring), during their induction – this will be regularly updated.

The following indicators here and in section 23 help staff recognise the potential need for early help:

- the child is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- the child is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- the child is showing early signs of abuse and/ or neglect and/or exploitation
- the child is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- the child is a privately fostered child

All staff should also –

- be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- be familiar with, and implement, safe working practices outlined in this policy and other school procedures.
- be familiar with and alert to the key indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and vulnerability to radicalisation.
- ensure that they take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of harm to young people at the school and home.
- ensure they take all reasonable steps to challenge extremist ideologies.
- contribute to a supportive culture where young people are able to report concerns.
- involve the DSL or DDSL when a child informs them that they are being abused (Keeping children safe in education, DfE, 2026).

- report any abuse, suspected abuse or concerns regarding extremism/radicalisation to the designated safeguarding lead(s) immediately and, where required, support social workers to take decisions about individual children.
- report any concerns regarding the behaviour of an adult working at the school to the Headteacher; and if the concern is regarding the Headteacher, then report this to the central HR Team or the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- undertake annual safeguarding and child protection and Prevent training.
- maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
- promote fundamental British values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom of association and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs).
- liaise with the designated safeguarding lead to report to the police any discovery that female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- discuss any concerns with the designated safeguarding lead relating to possible indicators that a child may be vulnerable to female genital mutilation.
- be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:
    - bullying (including cyberbullying).
    - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
    - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
    - sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
    - sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery).
    - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
    - be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse (Keeping children safe in education, DfE, 2026).

6. Staff, Trustee and Governor Training

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 states that governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. Induction and training should be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners. In addition, all staff should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

Governing bodies should recognise the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis. Opportunity should therefore be provided for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, it is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole Trust safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

Whilst considering the above training requirements, governing bodies and proprietors should have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

We therefore provide a comprehensive programme of training in safeguarding and child protection and keep a record of this training and the appropriate certification. Training is renewed in line with local and national expectations. The Trust has a service level agreement with SILiverpool Safeguarding who provide this training and materials to support delivery of the training.

Training Requirements

	Staff	Volunteers	Governors	Trustees	Pupils
Induction	Statutory awareness of safeguarding including Prevent within 3 weeks.	Statutory awareness of safeguarding including Prevent within 3 weeks.	Safeguarding induction training covering the strategic responsibilities of the role alongside contextual	Safeguarding induction training covering the strategic responsibilities of the role alongside contextual	Safety around school and who keeps us safe.

			information about the academy.	information about the Trust.	
Annually	A safeguarding update including a summary of statutory safeguarding, Family Help, reporting and recording.	A safeguarding update including a summary of statutory safeguarding, Family Help, reporting and recording.			In line with school curriculum plan
Every 2 years	DSL update for all staff who have access to pupil safeguarding files. Prevent	Prevent	Prevent	Prevent	

In addition, all staff must receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Annual safeguarding training includes updates on digital safeguarding threats, including risks from AI-generated content, deepfakes, synthetic media, misinformation, harmful online challenges, misogynistic content and online exploitation. Staff are trained to recognise and report concerns relating to the misuse of artificial intelligence platforms, chatbots, image generators or other emerging technologies. This training reflects KCSIE 2026 and the DfE's guidance on generative AI and product safety expectations.

7. Safeguarding Information for Parents

The academy will ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available publicly via the school website and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect and vulnerability to radicalisation may be made and the role of the school in this.

The Trust will ensure that the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is available publicly via the Trust website.

Parents will be expected to support the Trust's ethos and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy by demonstrating mutual respect and tolerance for all, promoting fundamental British Values and rejecting all forms of discrimination and extremism.

8. Emergency contacts for children

Wherever possible, each Academy will hold more than one emergency contact number for their pupils. This goes beyond the legal minimum and is good practice to give the school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern (Keeping children safe in education, DfE, 2026).

9. What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- 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; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding covers many parts of Trust life, processes and procedures, including, but not limited to –

- Child protection and safeguarding.
- Educational visits.
- Search, screening and confiscation.
- Use of restraint and positive handling.
- Intimate care.
- Work experience process.
- Visitors to site.

- Staff training and induction.
- Safer recruitment.

Many policies are therefore linked to this policy and should be read alongside this policy.

10. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

Within all our Academies we take every opportunity to teach children and their families about safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe. We discharge these duties through a bespoke curriculum offer in each Academy that takes account of and incorporates the DFE's guidance on such matters. We always offer a broad and balanced curriculum that provides opportunities to learn about these matters in detail. For specific details, please consult the website and policies of each Academy.

We ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. It is recognised that effective education is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

In our Academies, relevant topics will be included within Relationships Education (for all primary pupils), and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all primary and secondary pupils). In teaching these subjects schools must have regard to the statutory guidance Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

This whole-school approach will be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, and will tackle (in age-appropriate stages) issues such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise and abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- The concepts of, and laws relating to – sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM, and how to access support, and
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

The Trust acknowledges the publication of the new statutory *Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) guidance* by the Department for Education, which will come into force in September 2026. The Trust will review and revise its curriculum and safeguarding policies in line with the new

expectations, including any specific provisions relating to gender-questioning children. In the interim, the Trust will continue to deliver RSHE in an inclusive, age-appropriate, and safeguarding-led manner.

11. How to report a concern about a child

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean "the DSL (or deputy DSL)".

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger:

- Where possible, speak to the individual Academy DSL first to agree a course of action. If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team or the central Trust team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care.
- You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them.
- Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. All staff have access to CPOMS for this purpose and must follow the procedures as detailed in the child protection and safeguarding policy. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Visitors should use the agreed paper record.

12. Confidentiality

All staff are expected to:

- ensure that information they receive about pupils is treated in a discreet and confidential manner.
- seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them.
- be cautious about passing information to others about a pupil. School leaders should ensure that all staff who need to share 'special category personal data' are aware that the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition.

13. How we use CPOMS to report concerns and to create our safeguarding records

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.

Examples of poor practice include:

- Failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Poor record keeping.
- Failing to listen to the views of the child.
- Failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve.
- Not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies.
- Sharing information too slowly; and
- A lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

We have a robust process for reporting and recording concerns and we use CPOMS to discharge this duty.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing on CPOMS. If a paper file is used, information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

CPOMS records should include, as a minimum:

- 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.

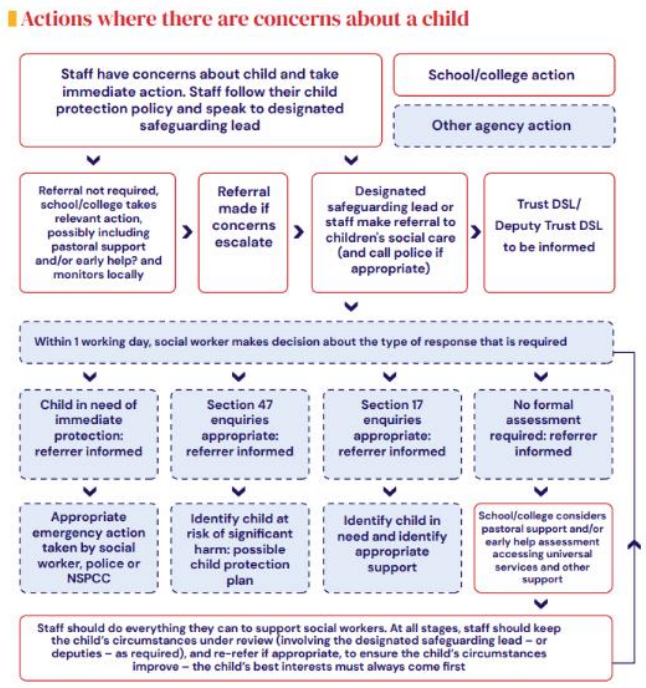
- Copies of any hand-written documents, scanned into the system.

Further guidance can be found: SJCMAT: Guide to reporting on CPOMS

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Where a record of a visible injury is required, the body map contained on CPOMS can be used.

As a Trust we use CPOMS to give high-level overviews of the numbers and types of concerns raised and to quality assure the work of the DSLs through effective, timely professional supervision. A collation and analysis of this data and support is then provided to the Trust Board on a regular cycle throughout each Trust year. This allows us to see what the level of presenting need is and to make decisions about whether each Trust has an appropriate level of resource available and / or to refine our central strategy.

14. Actions where there are concerns about a child flow chart



Adapted from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

15. Responding to safeguarding concerns

A concern raised may not progress any further with the designated safeguarding lead. A record of the discussion and any initial action taken will be documented on the safeguarding management system - CPOMS. When dealing with a case, the designated safeguarding lead will consider a number of questions.

- Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (by definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the priority/level and immediacy of risk/need?)
- Can the level of need identified be met:
    - in or by the school or by accessing universal services without referral to Children's Social Care or other targeted services?
    - by working with the child, parents and colleagues?
    - What resources are available to me/the school and what are their limitations?
    - Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to Children's Social Care which requests that an assessment of need be undertaken?
    - Is the level and/or likelihood of risk such that a child protection referral needs to be made (i.e., a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm?)
    - What information is available to me: child, parents, family and environment?
    - What information is inaccessible and potentially, how significant might this be?
    - Who do I/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?
    - Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support?
    - If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take?

The designated safeguarding lead will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. 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 child. In making this decision, the designated safeguarding lead will consider the Local Authority Safeguarding Partners' threshold document and framework for action that includes:

- the process for the early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided.
- the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services.

Where a designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead considers that a referral to children's social care may be required, they must consider the questions listed below and inform the Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours.

- Is this a child in need? Under section 17 (s.17 (10)) of the Children Act 1989, a child is 'in need' if:
    - the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development, without the provision of services by a local authority.
    - the child's health or development is likely to be impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services.
    - the child is disabled.
- Is this a child protection matter? Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:
    - is the subject of an emergency protection order.
    - is under police protection.
    - or where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A professional making a child protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The designated safeguarding lead will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of 'need and risk' and when to refer. Once a referral has been made, children's social care should respond within one working day indicating what further action they have decided to take. This may include further assessment of the child either through an early help assessment, through a child in need assessment (section 17 Children Act 1989) or a child protection enquiry (section 47 Children Act 1989).

The school will participate in strategy discussions and child protection conferences as required. Referrals regarding extremism will be made to children's social care.

16. Record Keeping – Child Protection

A child protection file will be started for an individual child as soon as the school is aware of any child protection concerns about them (online Where a member of staff raises a concern about the welfare or well-being of a pupil (this should be recorded on the CPOMS system.)

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access and only appropriately trained staff have access to these files, and sensitive information will not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. In relation to safeguarding, UK GDPR does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Information can be shared without consent if not doing so would place a child at risk. For further information regarding this please see the Trust's Data Protection policy.

17. Record Transfers

It is imperative that relevant child protection information is forwarded to the new/receiving establishment by the establishment that the subject child is departing and that this happens as quickly as possible. Such information sharing should occur between designated safeguarding leads and/or principal as soon as possible, ideally within the first 5 days of attendance. When a file is to be transferred, a 'Record of Child Protection File Transfer' should be completed and attached to the child protection file. It is inappropriate to simply forward all relevant documentation as this leaves the former school with no record. Rather:

- where feasible, designated safeguarding leads from former and receiving schools should arrange to meet and share relevant information, with copies of relevant and appropriate documentation being provided, or
- alternatively, telephone discussions should take place followed-up with appropriate summaries / chronologies and copies of key records. The new school/college should be provided with the ORIGINAL documentation. Where a parent elects for home education, the child is from a traveller, migrant or Romany family, and/or where the receiving school's identity is not known, the designated safeguarding lead at the former school should contact children's social care for advice.

18. Access to child protection files

The safety and welfare of a child must always be considered when making decisions whether to share confidential information. A child who has a child protection file has the right to access their personal record. This is known as the right of subject access under the Data Protection Act 2018. Parents (i.e., those with parental responsibility in law) may exercise the right of subject access on behalf of their child if they are unable to act on their own behalf or give their permission. As a general guide, a child of 13 or older is expected to be mature enough to make this kind of request independently or provide permission. Access to the information on file should be on a need-to-know basis among the staff. This can only be decided on a case-by-case basis. The confidentiality of the child and family should be respected as far as possible, but the welfare of the child is paramount. It would be unlikely that every member of staff needs to know the details of a case. Generally speaking, the closer the day-to-day contact with the child, the more likely they are to need to know an outline of the case. Essentially, if someone receives information in his/her professional capacity and the person giving that information believes it will be treated securely, and that belief is reasonable, then the recipient of the information will be under a duty to treat it securely.

19. Retention of child protection files

According to current guidance from the Records Management Society's Schools Retention Schedule, records must be kept (securely) until the subject's 25th birthday, after which they should be shredded (child protection records relating to children's social care involvement will be retained for much longer than this by the local authority in any event). The Data Protection Act requires that schools, or other bodies that keep information, maintain a list of records which have been destroyed and who authorised their destruction. Members of staff should record at least:

- file reference (or other unique identifier)
- file title (or brief description)
- number of files (and date range)
- the name of the authorising officer
- date action taken.

This must be kept in the establishment record of destruction form.

20. Children who have a social worker

A number of children and families in any Academy will have a social-worker and be open to Children's Services. Suitable records of such matters, as well as records of relevant statutory meetings should be kept within the CPOMS file and form part of the recorded chronology of referrals and actions. The nature of the contact, frequency and resulting actions should be recorded and where school staff are responsible for actions related to child protection plans etc., these should also be recorded and actioned in-line with Working Together 2018 and other relevant statutory guidance.

The Trust works in partnership with the local Virtual School Head (VSH) not only for looked-after and previously looked-after children but also, in line with KCSIE 2026, to support children who are in kinship care arrangements. A Virtual School Head (VSH) is a strategic leader appointed by a local authority to champion the educational outcomes of children in care and, in some cases, previously looked-after children. They work to ensure these children receive the support and resources they need to succeed in their education, acting as a central point of contact and advocate. The VSH may offer advice, support and strategic oversight in ensuring that these children's educational and welfare needs are met. The Trust ensures that DSLs are aware of the VSH's extended role and collaborate where appropriate.

21. Categories of abuse

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

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

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

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their School or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion

from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All Trust staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone.

In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Trust and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

22. Section 17 (CIN) and Section 47 (CP)

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

Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:

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

What will the local authority do?

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required.

This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required;
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process; and further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required).

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

23. Providing Early Help/Family Help

Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

Any child may benefit from early help. In line with KCSIE 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, staff should identify emerging concerns early, consider whether school-led support is sufficient, and understand when concerns should be escalated into local Family Help or statutory safeguarding arrangements. Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help or Family Help for a child with the following needs:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

Trusts have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies and Trustees should ensure that the Trust contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

It is especially important that Trusts understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. Governing bodies, proprietors, and their senior leadership teams, especially their

designated safeguarding leads, should make themselves aware of and follow their local arrangements.

Safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To fulfil this role, they must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies.

Relevant agencies are those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children with regard to local need. Safeguarding partners will have set out in their published arrangements which organisations and agencies they will be working with, and the expectations placed on any agencies and organisations by the arrangements.

Working Together is very clear that all Trusts in the local area should be fully engaged, involved, and included in safeguarding arrangements. It is expected that, locally, the safeguarding partners will name Trusts as relevant agencies and will reach their own conclusions on the best way to achieve the active engagement with individual institutions in a meaningful way.

Once named as a relevant agency, Trusts, in the same way as other relevant agencies, are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements. They must act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements.

Governing bodies and Trustees should understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment and ensure they are reflected in their own policies and procedures. They should also be prepared to supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners.

Trusts should work with social care, the Police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.

All Trusts should allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

If early help or Family Help is appropriate, any member of the Safeguarding Team, under the direction of the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help or Family Help assessment, and in some cases may act as the lead practitioner, in line with local safeguarding partner arrangements.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the Trust will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

24. Information sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Trusts have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the Trust and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

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

It is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.

This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.
- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- for Trusts, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met.

For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harms test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with Trusts' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. Where in doubt Trusts should seek independent 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 children leave the Trust, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, to allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives, also ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

For Trusts, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named persons with oversight for SEND, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

25. External bodies

In the majority of cases, schools will be able to share personal information using the lawful basis of public task (personal data) and substantial public interest (special category data). There may be circumstances were the child and family's consent to sharing should be sought. If consent has been withheld, this must be recorded, including the reason given for withholding consent. Exceptions to the requirement to gain consent are that if seeking such consent could:

- increase the risk of harm to the child or someone else
- undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (a crime that causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child, young person or adult
- interfere with any potential investigation. The names of any other children, other than the pupil who is the subject of the record, should be removed when disclosing records, unless consent is obtained from the individual(s) concerned (or their parent/carer on their behalf). Care should be taken to ensure all identifying information is removed from the copy of the record to be shared.

Child protection information should not ordinarily be shared with agencies other than statutory agencies such as the Police (e.g., information should not be released to solicitors etc). Where such a request is made, advice should be sought from the Trust Safeguarding Lead. If there is a Police

request for the child protection information, please ensure that the requesting officers provide a data request form. This form will show the information the Police are requesting, who the request relates to, why the Police are requesting the information, and the exemption they are relying on to process the information. The school should securely retain a copy of this form. Conversations between designated personnel at different schools (e.g., sharing concerns or asking for information about sibling groups) are perfectly acceptable under the lawful bases of public task and substantial public interest. As mentioned, there may be occasions when consent is the most appropriate lawful basis, where possible consent should be sought from parents before such a conversation takes place. Any relevant child protection information coming to light should be carefully logged.

26. Relevant local and national issues in safeguarding and child protection

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

27. Child on Child abuse (including harassment and violence)

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children, including through harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, bullying, discriminatory abuse and online abuse. This can happen inside and outside school or college and online. Staff should recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, respond in a proportionate and child-centred way, and report concerns promptly to the DSL.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, this does not mean that such abuse is not happening; it may simply not be being reported. Systems for children to report concerns must be well promoted, easily understood and accessible, so that children can confidently report abuse knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously. Staff must report any concern about child-on-child abuse promptly to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

The Trust adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Child-on-child abuse must never be dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny or misandry, and an unsafe environment for children. All allegations will be recorded, investigated and dealt with in line with this policy and the Trust’s linked behaviour, anti-bullying, online safety and child-on-child abuse procedures.

The Trust recognises that, for some forms of child-on-child abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators; however, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable, can affect any child, and will be taken seriously. The Trust will support the child who has experienced

harm, the child who has allegedly caused harm, and any other children affected, using a child-centred, proportionate and safeguarding-led response.

Child-on-child abuse can take different forms, including but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children.
- physical abuse, which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm, including physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon.
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny or misandry. Part five of KCSIE 2026 sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of this nature.
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse; and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including images or videos generated or altered using artificial intelligence. The Trust's approach follows UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes and the Trust's search, screening and confiscation procedures.
- upskirting, which is a criminal offence and 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 to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour. Responses should consider the needs, wishes and safety of the child who has experienced harm, the child who has caused harm, and any other children affected, using an evidence-informed and proportionate approach.

Child on Child abuse must be addressed through learning within:

- RSE curriculum
- Dedicated days
- British Values' Day

- Tutor time resources
- Circle time
- Online lessons
- Assemblies

Where possible, RSE is delivered by professionals who discuss areas around:

- Healthy Relationships
- Consent
- Coercive Behaviour
- STIs
- Protection
- Different types of relationships
- LGBTQI+
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Online safety

Where a report of child-on-child sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence or sexual harassment is made, the DSL will consider the immediate safety and welfare of all children involved. Parents or carers will be informed at an appropriate stage unless doing so would increase risk to a child or compromise a statutory investigation. Risk assessments and support plans will be put in place as required.

Risk assessments should consider supervision, lesson groupings, shared spaces such as toilets and corridors, break and lunchtime arrangements, online contact, transport and routes to and from school. Where appropriate, arrangements should reduce the risk of further harm or distress while avoiding any action that suggests blame or disbelief towards the child who has reported harm.

Routes to and from school should be considered and appropriate measures should be put in place to safeguard all parties.

It is important that pupils feel they can report concerns about child-on-child abuse in a range of safe, trusted and accessible ways. Reporting routes will be promoted regularly and explained in age-appropriate language.

- Face to face to any member of staff within the establishment
- Via any other means to a member of staff within the establishment
- Through any academy reporting system, safeguarding email address, pastoral route, online reporting mechanism, or other locally agreed method that is clearly explained to pupils.

Where appropriate, children affected by child-on-child sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviour or teenage relationship abuse will be supported through school-based pastoral support and/or specialist external services, which may include a Young Person's Domestic Violence Advocate or other local safeguarding partner services.

Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting)

St Joseph Catholic Multi-Academy Trust follows the non-statutory guidance produced by UKCCIS "Responding to Sexting In schools". The link to this guidance is below:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

28. Child Exploitation

Both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g., through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g., they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from

others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

29. Radicalisation and Prevent

For the purposes of this policy, **"radicalisation"** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this policy, **"extremism"** refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

For the purposes of this policy, **"terrorism"** refers to an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public, and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties. The school will actively assess the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify pupils who may be susceptible to extremist ideologies and radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting the DSL or making a Prevent referral. The school will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate.

The school will ensure that they engage with parents and families, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. In doing so, the school will assist and advise family members who raise concerns and provide information for support mechanisms. Any concerns over radicalisation will be discussed with the pupil's parents, unless the school has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result.

The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect pupils against the risk of radicalisation. The DSL will hold formal training

sessions with all members of staff to ensure they are aware of the risk indicators and their duties regarding preventing radicalisation.

If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

30. Female Genital Mutilation

Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the Police, **personally**. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have good reason not to, they should also discuss the case initially with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. **Staff should not examine pupils. Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow the local safeguarding procedures.

31. Domestic abuse/domestic violence

Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic violence can be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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

Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If Police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the Police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass. The DSL will make contact with the Police if further details are required, provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

32. Serious violence

All staff should be 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 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. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for Trusts is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

33. Children in the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support

children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has child arrangements information l with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

34. Children with family members in prison

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

35. Other relevant issues

Mental health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This includes self-harm, suicidal ideation, risk of suicide, eating disorders, or indicators that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health problem. Education staff are, however, well placed to observe children day to day and identify behaviour that may suggest a child is struggling with their mental health or is at risk of developing a mental health need. Potential warning signs may include significant changes in behaviour, ongoing difficulty sleeping, withdrawing from social situations, not wanting to do things they usually enjoy, physical signs of self-harm, or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who shows these signs will be suicidal or have a mental health concern. However, staff should use these indicators to identify children who may be struggling, offer early support and, where there is a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL or deputy without delay. Any intervention offered by the school should be evidenced as safe and effective and appropriate to the child's need and phase of education. If staff believe a child is in immediate danger, they should call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs urgent mental health help but it is not an emergency, staff can seek help through NHS 111 online or by calling 111 and selecting the mental health option.

Homelessness

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

36. Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. As part of the PSHE curriculum, lessons are provided on outdoor safety. Lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

37. Self-harm

Self-harm is when someone deliberately hurts or injures themselves. It is a continuum ranging from a behaviour which has strong suicidal intent to behaviour which is part of a coping mechanism. It can be used to describe behaviours such as cutting, scratching, burning, taking overdoses, punching oneself, substance abuse, self-poisoning, unsafe sex etc.

Common problems preceding self-harm are:

- difficulties with parents/boy or girlfriends/siblings/friends
- school problems/bullying
- mental health issues e.g., depression, eating disorders
- low self esteem
- sexual problems
- physical ill health
- alcohol/drug abuse
- physical/sexual abuse.

Possible reasons/motives underlying self-harm are:

- to die
- to escape from unbearable distress
- to change the behaviour of others
- to show desperation to others
- to get back at other people or make them feel guilty
- to relieve tension
- to seek help.

All staff are expected to:

- listen to pupils who are experiencing emotional distress in a calm and non-judgemental way
- report the self-harm incident to the DSL as soon as possible.
- not make promises e.g., assuring confidentiality which cannot be kept. Reassure the pupil that in order to receive help and find more helpful ways to cope with problems others may need to know.
- guide the pupil towards wanting to make positive changes
- promote problem-solving techniques and non-harmful ways to deal with emotional distress
- provide accurate information about self-harming and awareness about associated mental health problems
- be aware of health and safety issues such as first aid if the incident has occurred in school
- seek medical advice or urgent medical assistance where required (e.g., in the event of an overdose).

The designated safeguarding lead will:

- keep accurate records of incidents of self-harm and concerns
- follow up any medical emergencies or referrals
- liaise with local services about help available for young people who self-harm
- keep up-to-date information about self-harm, e.g., info leaflets from YoungMinds
- liaise with the wider safeguarding and pastoral team contact the parents at the appropriate time. Involve the pupil in this process. Inform the parent about the appropriate help and support that is available for their child. Monitor the pupil's progress, e.g., school work, general presentation, following the incident
- know when to seek help to deal with their own feelings and distress. Pupils will be expected to:
- talk to the appropriate staff member if they are in emotional distress
- alert a teacher if they suspect a fellow pupil of being suicidal or at serious risk of harm to themselves and know when confidentiality must be broken. Parents will be encouraged to:
- endorse the school's approach to dealing with self-harm and education/awareness
- work in partnership with the school
- keep the school informed when a child has external agency support

38. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with SEND, disabilities or certain health conditions may face additional safeguarding challenges and vulnerabilities. In line with KCSIE 2026, the Trust recognises that these pupils can face barriers to recognising, reporting, or understanding abuse, and that safeguarding indicators must not be assumed to relate only to a child's disability, medical condition, communication needs or support arrangements.

- Safeguarding practices for children with SEND are tailored to reflect their individual communication styles, needs, and circumstances. The Trust maintains high vigilance for:
- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse (such as changes in behaviour, mood or injury) are simply related to a child's disability or need;
- Increased risk of social isolation or bullying;
- Communication barriers or reliance on others for personal care;
- Disproportionate impact of certain behaviours (e.g. physical restraint, seclusion) on wellbeing;

Staff are trained to recognise these risks and to take extra care in interpreting safeguarding indicators for children with SEND. All schools ensure that reasonable adjustments are in place and

that safeguarding responses are adapted appropriately, including how concerns are reported and how children are listened to.

Where children with SEND are identified as needing early help or statutory intervention, this is coordinated through joint planning with the DSL, SENCO, and relevant external professionals. Every effort is made to ensure pupils with SEND have trusted adults, clear reporting routes, and full access to the school's wider safeguarding education (e.g. RSHE and online safety).

The Trust takes due regard of the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years* and the latest *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2026) guidance when planning and implementing safeguarding arrangements for children with SEND.

39. Alternative Provision

The Trust recognises that the cohort of pupils in alternative provision often have complex needs and is aware of the additional risk of harm our pupils may be vulnerable to. Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

The Trust has regard to the following statutory guidance: Alternative provision – DfE Statutory Guidance, and Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school – DfE Statutory Guidance

St Joseph Catholic Multi Academy Trust uses a range of alternative provision settings across its Academies. To ensure that robust safeguarding procedures are in place:

- The Trust provides the alternative provision provider with a copy of the Trust's safeguarding pack for staff.
- The Trust also requests the safeguarding policies of each provider, along with written confirmation that relevant employment checks have taken place.
- The DfE Register of Establishments will be used to check that provision is DfE Registered.
- Pre-placement objectives will be set
- A pre-placement visit carried out
- An agreed formal process of on-site review, as a minimum on a half termly basis
- Weekly contact with the provider and daily alerts received if there is non-attendance.

In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*, the Trust ensures that for every alternative provision placement:

- A **written confirmation** is obtained from the provider that all relevant **safeguarding and safer recruitment checks** (including enhanced DBS checks, barred list checks, and right to

work documentation) have been completed for all staff involved in supervising or supporting our pupils.

- The **exact location** or premises at which the pupil will attend is known and documented in the placement agreement.
- A formal **review of the placement takes place at least once every half term**, involving the pupil, school, and provider. These reviews assess the pupil's safety, wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, and academic progress.
- The school retains the right to **withdraw the pupil from the placement** if safeguarding or welfare concerns emerge, and will liaise with the DSL, local authority, and other agencies to arrange suitable support or alternative provision as required.

The attendance and welfare of all pupils who attend these settings is checked in line with each Academy's own processes, using appropriate register codes and following up on non-attendance on the same day.

40. Work Experience

The Trust uses Unifrog's Placements tool to manage work experience placements. The tool collates the necessary information and permissions relating to health and safety, risk assessments, insurance, safeguarding and GDPR compliance, supporting the coordination of in-person and virtual placements.

Commented [AR1]: Ensure that Unifrog details Enhanced DBS checks- as our students are under 16

Before approving a placement, the Trust will take reasonable steps to ensure the provider has appropriate arrangements to protect pupils from harm and that the placement is suitable, safe and appropriately supervised.

Where supervision of a pupil on placement meets the regulated activity threshold, the Trust will ensure that a barred person is not permitted to undertake that activity. The Trust recognises the statutory limits on requesting enhanced DBS checks with children's barred list information for staff supervising 16- and 17-year-olds on work experience.

Where a pupil aged 16 or over undertakes work experience in a specified place, such as a school or sixth form college, the provider should consider whether the activity is regulated activity and whether an enhanced DBS check is appropriate. DBS checks cannot be requested for children under 16.

41. Private Fostering

Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home.

A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of Trust staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

The Trust will then notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

42. Children absent or missing from education

In accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)* and *Children Missing Education (2025)*, the Trust recognises that persistent or unexplained absence, repeated absence, or a pupil missing from education altogether, is a significant safeguarding risk.

Absence may be an indicator of abuse, neglect, exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), or other contextual harm. Pupils who are regularly absent, or who are removed from school without clear transition plans, are particularly vulnerable.

The school monitors attendance data daily and reviews patterns regularly. Where attendance concerns may indicate safeguarding risk, they are escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will assess the situation, consider whether early help, Family Help or statutory intervention is required, and take appropriate action, including referrals to children's social care or the police where necessary.

In accordance with *Children Missing Education* guidance, the school will inform the Local Authority when:

- A pupil is removed from the school roll (e.g. moved abroad, elective home education, etc.)
- A pupil fails to attend school for 10 consecutive school days without explanation
- A pupil joins or leaves at a non-standard transition point

The school maintains at least two emergency contacts per child and will make reasonable enquiries to locate a child before removal from roll, including welfare checks or home visits.

The Trust works with local attendance teams, education welfare officers, and safeguarding partners to share concerns and ensure that children missing education are identified and protected swiftly.

Absconding and Missing from Site

The Trust recognises that a pupil who absconds from the school site or fails to return from an off-site activity may be at immediate risk of harm. In the event a pupil is found to be missing during the school day, staff will follow the academy's missing pupil/absconding procedure, which includes notifying the DSL, conducting a site search, and informing the police and parents without delay if the child cannot

be located quickly. For pupils with a known risk of absconding, individual risk assessments and supervision plans will be in place. Any absconding incident will be recorded and may trigger a safeguarding response, especially where there are underlying concerns such as exploitation, abuse, or neglect.

Transport to and from school

There may be occasions where pupils are exposed to additional vulnerability when travelling to and from school, including where transport is arranged by the local authority. Where pupils are identified as having additional vulnerabilities, academies must ensure that appropriate risk assessment is in place. This includes, but is not limited to, pupils with SEND, pupils with an EHCP, pupils open to social care, looked-after children and young carers.

Each academy must have clear arrangements for supervising, registering and handing over pupils who arrive at or are collected from school. The academy must identify the person responsible for managing these arrangements and ensure any training needs are addressed. Risk assessment may cover the overall process, but individual risk assessments must be completed where required. Where arrangements are assessed as unsuitable or unsafe, concerns must be raised and challenged with the local authority immediately.

Admissions register

Pupils are placed on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day that is agreed by the school, or when the school has been notified that the pupil will first be attending. The school will notify the LA within 5 days of when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register.

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date and accurate at all times and will inform parents when any changes occur. Two emergency contacts will be held for each pupil where possible. Staff will monitor pupils who do not attend the school on the agreed date and will notify the LA at the earliest opportunity.

If a parent notifies the school that their child will live at a different address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live
- The new address
- The date from when the pupil will live at that address

If a parent notifies the school that their child will be attending a different school, or is already registered at a different school, the following information will be recorded on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school
- The date on which the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school

Where a pupil moves to a new school, the school will use a secure internet system to securely transfer pupils' data.

To ensure accurate data is collected to allow effective safeguarding, the school will inform the LA of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), where they:

- Have been taken out of the school by their parents, and are being educated outside the national education system, e.g. home education.
- Have ceased to attend the school, and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the premises.
- Have been certified by the school's medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and their parent has not indicated the intention to the pupil continuing to attend school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Have been in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The school will also remove a pupil from the admissions register where the school and LA has been unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries into their attendance.

If a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the LA with the following information:

- The full name of the pupil
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
- The full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date that the pupil will start living there, if applicable
- The name of the pupil's new school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable
- The grounds for removal from the admissions register under regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

The school will work with the LA to establish methods of making returns for pupils back into the school. The school will highlight to the LA where they have been unable to obtain necessary information from parents, e.g. where an address is unknown. The school will also highlight any other necessary contextual information, including safeguarding concerns.

Overage Students

The Trust recognises that in some circumstances, students may present for admission who are older than the typical age range for their year group. While over-age admission may be appropriate in specific cases (e.g. pupils newly arrived in the UK, gaps in education, or trauma-related delays), it can also present safeguarding risks that must be carefully assessed.

Where a student appears to be significantly older than their peer group or where documentation is unclear or inconsistent:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed immediately.
- The school will request original documents, such as birth certificates, passports, or biometric residence permits.
- If age fraud or risk of exploitation (e.g. trafficking, county lines, forced marriage) is suspected, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police as appropriate.
- Risk assessments will be completed where appropriate, especially when placing older pupils in settings with younger students.

The school maintains a cautious, risk-based approach to age verification and enrolment decisions, always prioritising the safety and welfare of all pupils. All over-age admissions are reviewed and approved by the Headteacher in consultation with the DSL.

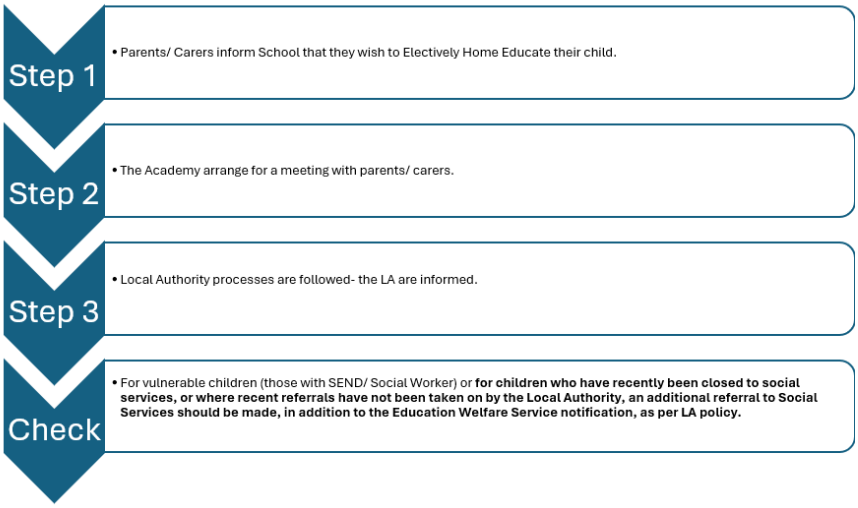
43. Elective Home Education

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the Trust will work together with the LA and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

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

When a child is removed from the school roll and becomes home educated, the Trust and its Academies follow local processes for informing the local authority of the necessary details about the child and their family. The Trust always works with the relevant local authority officers to ensure that all information is passed on in timely manner.



44. Online safety, data protection and the use of mobile phones and digital photographic equipment

Staff should bring immediately to the attention of the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior leadership team any behaviours by adults or children themselves that may be risky or harmful.

Any concerns regarding online safety should be reported to the DSL via the CPOMS platform.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our Academies implement a whole school approach to online safety that sets out to protect and educate both children and staff in their use of technology alongside establishing mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns, recognising that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks.

Staff should also report any concerns about sexting (youth produced sexual imagery or 'nudes') to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior member of staff who will follow the guidance in Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UK Council for Child Internet Safety, December 2020). This document provides clarity as to how staff should respond to these incidents.

The school's Online/E-safety/Acceptable Use policy clearly outlines the way in which the school uses technology and the measures in place to ensure safe, and responsible and respectful use by all. There is a clear code of conduct for staff and volunteers which sets out the use of new technologies, mobile phones and personal photographic equipment around children. The school

will consider, in particular, Looked after Children (Children in Care) who might be put at risk by being included in publicity materials or school photographs.

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

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

The DfE highlights the risks of new technologies:

'The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- *content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material content, which KCSIE 2026 defines as now also including: misinformation/disinformation/conspiracy theories*
- *contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users*
- *conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm*
- *commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams'*

As a Trust we also acknowledge the risk to pupils from harmful online challenges.

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation and sexual abuse. Technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. To ensure adequate knowledge and awareness both inside and outside of our Academies we invest significant time speaking with parents and carers about children's access to online sites when away from the educational establishment.

Our Academies ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme in our policies and procedures. This includes considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), the Trust uses the DfE's Plan Technology for Your School tool to assess and implement appropriate filtering and monitoring strategies. This tool

informs how responsibilities are assigned, how alerts are reviewed, and how infrastructure risks are managed to protect pupils from harm online.

The Trust also follows the DfE's guidance on generative AI and product safety expectations to ensure that any use of artificial intelligence, including generative text tools, chatbots, image generators and other synthetic media tools, does not compromise pupil safety, privacy, wellbeing or safeguarding practice. Staff are made aware of the risks associated with AI-generated misinformation, bias, deepfakes, impersonation, harmful content and inappropriate pupil use, and filtering and monitoring systems are reviewed accordingly.

The DfE guidance "Teaching Online Safety in Schools" (2023) also outlines how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of forthcoming and existing curriculum requirements www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools.

45. Monitoring and filtering of internet and device usage

Each Academy has appropriate and robust monitoring and filtering of internet and device usage, which is regularly checked and monitored. Where concerns are raised through the monitoring system or through staff checks within lessons etc., staff will follow the guidance outlined in this policy that is relevant to the concern and will work with parents and relevant agencies to take the most appropriate actions and provide the most appropriate support. For further details see the policies of individual Academies.

Our systems are benchmarked against DfE filtering and monitoring standards and supported by the Plan Technology for Your School framework. Monitoring tools are reviewed in the context of emerging technologies, including generative AI, deepfake or synthetic media risks, harmful online challenges, misogynistic content, extremist content, grooming, exploitation and other online harms. Concerns identified through filtering or monitoring are escalated to the DSL in line with this policy.

46. Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is a crime. It is a form of abuse directed towards a child or vulnerable adult, including adults who are forced into marriage against their free will.

Forced marriage is a marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Force can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage can be committed if a person lacks capacity, whether or not coercion plays a part.

Under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 a person commits an offence if he or she uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into a marriage and believes, or ought reasonably to believe, that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without free and full consent.

It is an offence to do anything intended to cause a child to marry before the child's eighteenth birthday, whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats, or any other form of coercion or deception. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

All staff will be alert to the indicators that a pupil is at risk of, or has undergone, forced marriage, including, but not limited to, the pupil:

- Being absent from school – particularly where this is persistent.
- Requesting for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Being fearful about forthcoming school holidays.
- Being subjected to surveillance by siblings or cousins at school.
- Demonstrating a decline in behaviour, engagement, performance, exam results or punctuality.
- Being withdrawn from school by their parents.
- Being removed from a day centre when they have a physical or learning disability.
- Not being allowed to attend extracurricular activities.
- Suddenly announcing that they are engaged to a stranger, e.g. to friends or on social media.
- Having a family history of forced marriage, e.g. their older siblings have been forced to marry.
- Being prevented from going on to further or higher education.
- Showing signs of mental health disorders and behaviours, e.g. depression, self-harm, anorexia.
- Displaying a sudden decline in their educational performance, aspirations or motivation.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a pupil who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL or headteacher and local safeguarding procedures will be followed – this could include referral to CSCS, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit. The DSL or headteacher will ensure the pupil is spoken to privately about these concerns and further action taken as appropriate. Pupils will always be listened to and have their comments taken seriously.

It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the pupil's family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the pupil, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the pupil in further danger.

Advice will be sought from the Forced Marriage Unit following any suspicion of forced marriage among pupils.

If a pupil is being forced to marry, or is fearful of being forced to, the school will be especially vigilant for signs of mental health disorders and self-harm. The pupil will be supported by the DSL and senior mental health lead and referrals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff members will make themselves aware of how they can support victims of forced marriage in order to respond to the victim's needs at an early stage, and be aware of the practical help they can offer, e.g. referral to social services and local and national support groups.

Local child safeguarding procedures will be activated following concerns regarding forced marriage – the school will use existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

The school will support any victims to seek help by:

- Making them aware of their rights and choices to seek legal advice and representation.
- Recording injuries and making referrals for medical examination where necessary.
- Providing personal safety advice.
- Developing a safety plan in case they are seen, e.g. by preparing another reason for why the victim is seeking help.

The school will establish where possible whether pupils at risk of forced marriage have a dual nationality or two passports.

The school will aim to create an open environment where pupils feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – this means creating an environment where forced marriage is discussed openly within the curriculum and support and counselling are provided routinely.

The school will take a whole school approach towards educating on forced marriage in the school curriculum and environment – in particular, the school's RSHE curriculum will incorporate teaching about the signs of forced marriage and how to obtain help. Appropriate materials and sources of further support will be signposted to pupils. Pupils will be encouraged to access appropriate advice, information and support.

Teachers and other staff members will be educated through continuous professional development about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the signs to look out for.

47. Staff, governor and trustee induction

Copies of relevant safeguarding policies and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 are provided to all staff at induction. All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, are expected to read Part 1. All staff also receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, filtering and monitoring, and emerging risks such as AI-generated content, at induction. The training is regularly updated.

Our induction and ongoing training ensures that –

- All staff know our child protection and safeguarding processes and how to implement them.
- All staff know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected.

- Staff know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- All staff know about safer working practices and how to raise concerns about members of staff and other adults, if they are concerned about their conduct or behaviour in relation to children and / or vulnerable adults.
- All staff are aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- All staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

48. Safer working practices

It's vital that a culture of safer recruitment involves creating and sustaining a safer working environment. This has become a critical issue in all schools and settings where staff are in contact with children and vulnerable young adults. Processes should exist to protect children and vulnerable young adults and must include all those professionals working in those settings. Staff must demonstrate how they are working safely, openly and with transparency. All staff should be seen to be acting as outstanding role models.

Our Trust provides:

- A staff code of conduct
- A policy around staff use of electronic communication, social media and the internet
- A whistle blowing policy
- An online safety policy for pupils/students
- Additional guidance (Trust based) on practices in the Trust, e.g., personal and intimate care, medicines, use of physical intervention etc.

49. Safer Recruitment

Each Academy maintains their single central record detailing checks carried out in each school within the MAT, with the Trust Safeguarding Lead maintaining oversight. The information is recorded in such a way that allows for details for each individual school to be provided separately, and without delay, to those entitled to inspect that information, including by inspectors.

The single central record indicates whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed, or a certificate obtained:

- an identity check, (identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website).
- a barred list check.
- an enhanced DBS check requested/certificate provided.
- a prohibition from teaching check.
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK.
- a check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- a section 128 check undertaken for those in management positions.

The details of an individual are removed from the single central record once they no longer work at the Trust.

To ensure that we have uniformity across the Multi Academy Trust and individual schools, we use Arbor Education (MIS) to discharge our duties in relation to recording information on the SCR. Check and update Staff Details from the school Single Central Record (SCR) – Arbor Help Centre (arbor-education.com)

50. Allegations against staff

The Trust has procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold, about staff members, including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors. This includes those that are considered to be 'Low-Level' concerns.

An allegation/safeguarding concern is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer/contractor 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 which indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children or;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicated they may not be suitable to work with children.

This relates to members of staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors who are currently working in any school or college regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the Police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the Police. This includes allegations reported or made by a child, parent or member of the public.

If staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, then:

- this should be referred to the head teacher; staff may also consider discussing any concerns with the DSL and if appropriate make any referral via them.
- where there are concerns/allegations about the head teacher, this should be referred to the CEO / Chair of Trustees. Where the concerns relate to the CEO these should be referred to the Chair of Trustees.
- in the event of concerns/allegations about the Trust or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the CEO / Chair of the Trust, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs).

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised, and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present. This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the Head Teacher.

The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The Head Teacher/Chair of Governors will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

If the allegation meets any of the four criteria set out at the start of this section, contact should always be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay and within 24 hours in line with CP procedures.

If it is decided that the allegation requires a child protection strategy meeting or a joint evaluation meeting, this will take place in accordance with local processes.

If it is decided it does not require a child protection strategy meeting or joint evaluation meeting, the LADO will provide the employer with advice and support on how the allegations should be managed.

The Head Teacher should, as soon as possible, following briefing from the LADO inform the subject of the allegation.

Concerns that do not meet the 'harm threshold'

The Trust may also need to take action in response to 'low-level' concerns about staff.

A 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant; a low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school/college may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the 'harm threshold' or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

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

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Where low-level concerns are reported to the school/college, the headteacher will be informed of all low-level concerns and is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns.

Low-level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be shared with their employers so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If the school/college is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and other relevant policies and procedures (for example data retention policies).

Where a pattern is identified, the school/college will implement appropriate action, for example reviewing the LADO threshold and completing a referral if harm test met.

There are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned. This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

Where the Trust decides not to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, we must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency). Details about how to make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency can be found on Gov.uk

Where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation or safeguarding concerns, this to be referred to the chair of governors, or the chair of the Trust Board.

51. Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Trust's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously. Appropriate Whistleblowing procedures are in place for such concerns to be raised as detailed in the Whistleblowing Policy.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them: general guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: the NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their Trust. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

52. Complaints

The trust complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor safeguarding practices.

53. Use of reasonable force, search, screening and confiscation

Each Academy follows the DFE guidance on these matters and the CMAT policy on the use of reasonable force, restraint, search, screening and confiscation. Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK

54. Site safety and security

Trust security is ever changing and needs to be kept under constant review, with vulnerable areas identified and remedial actions implemented to address them.

No two schools are identical, and the design of the buildings and the layout of the site will differ from school to school. However, many of the issues revolving around security are generic.

Schools should consider:

- Site perimeter
- Main site entrance
- Lighting
- Car parking area
- Doors and windows
- Alarm systems and CCTV
- IT suite
- Property security Guidance from the government on these areas can be found here

55. Visitors to site

All visitors to the Trust's Academy sites must provide photographic identification at the main entrance (CORPORATE I.D). In addition, in the case of supply staff, we will request sight of the individual's DBS certificate, in line with Independent School Standards.

If a visitor is not DBS checked, they will be signed into and out of the building, and escorted at all times. Staff will be issued with a red lanyard if they do not have a DBS certificate.

Visitors, who have met Trust expectations in line with Safer Recruitment and who are detailed on the SCR, are issued with a green lanyard whilst on site and may engage with students in line with that of an employee. SJCMAT employees, wearing an SJCMAT issued staff lanyard, do not require further visitor lanyards. If SJCMAT employees do not present with a staff lanyard, but have suitable ID in line with the SCR, please refer to the visitor procedure above.

The central team SCR can be accessed in each academy.

56. Use of academy premises for non-academy activities

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

Where the governing board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The Trust Board will also ensure that there are arrangements

in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The Trust Board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Extracurricular activities and clubs

External bodies that host extracurricular activities and clubs at the school, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSCS or the police, if necessary.

All national governing bodies of sport that receive funding from either Sport England or UK Sport must aim to meet the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

These arrangements will apply regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

57. Monitoring - Across the Trust Estate

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust DSL annually.

Academy specific policies will be reviewed annually by the DSL, Headteacher and Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Contact information

Name of Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs B Battersby
Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Headteacher
Contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead	safeguarding@stcharles.sjcmat.co.uk

Name of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Mrs G Woosey Miss K Ehlen
Role of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Pastoral Lead Class Teacher
Contact details for the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	gwoosey@stcharles.sjcmat.co.uk kehlen@stcharles.sjcmat.co.uk

Name of Director of School Improvement	Ms A Fidler
Contact details for the Director of School Improvement	afidler@sjcmat.co.uk

Name of Chair of Governors	
Contact details for the Chair of Governors	

Name of Safeguarding Governor	Mr P Evans
Contact details for the Safeguarding Governor	enquiries@stcharles.sjcmat.co.uk

Local Authority Social Care contact details	Richard Buckland
Local Authority Social Care contact details (out of hours)	Richard.buckland@liverpool.gov.uk 0151 459 2606

Local Authority Designated Officer name	Pauline Trubshaw, LADO
Local Authority Designated Officer contact details	lado@liverpool.gov.uk 0784 172 7309

Local Authority Prevent named person	Declan Sammin
Local Authority Prevent contact details	prevent@liverpool.gov.uk 07394559105 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm)

Appendix 2 – Local agency procedures

Include:

- Threshold guidance
- Early Help
- Referral (MASH/MARF) process and contact details
- LA guidance and advice services