

SAFEGUARDING POLICY



BirchfieldSchool

'Keeping Our Children Safe From Harm' Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership

Linked policies such as Recruitment and Selection of Staff, Staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use of Technology, Minibus Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing should be read in tandem with this policy and are available in hard copy upon request.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Designated Safeguarding Leads :

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Mrs Pascale Mellor (Head of Senior School)

Birchfield School, Albrighton, Near Wolverhampton, WV7 3AF

Telephone Number : 01902 372534

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/Responsibility for the Early Years :

Mrs Amy Jones (Headteacher)

Birchfield School, Albrighton, Near Wolverhampton, WV7 3AF

Telephone Number : 01902 372534

Safeguarding Adviser - Advisory Committee : Sir Michael Griffiths

c/o Birchfield School, Albrighton, Near Wolverhampton, WV7 3AF

Telephone Number : 01902 372534

SHROPSHIRE SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (SSCP)

CONTACT DETAILS

Shropshire Safeguarding First Point of Contact Team (FPOC)

Tel : **0345 678 9021**

Out of Hours Tel : 0345 678 9040

www.shropshire.gov.uk/early-help

Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership

Shropshire Council Room GN94 Ground Floor, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate

Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Tel 01743 254259

<http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk>

For other areas, please refer to the Contact Details at the end of this policy

Shropshire Council LA Designated Officer (LADO): Michelle Taylor - 0345 678 9021

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PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THE POLICY

Birchfield School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils, acting in their best interests and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. This policy covers pupils in the main school as well as the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and is mandatory for **all** staff, (permanent and temporary), the Advisory Committee, visitors, contractors and volunteers at the school and not subject to discretion. The policy applies whenever staff, members of the Advisory Committee or volunteers are working with pupils including when this is away from school, for example at another institution, school visits and trips, sporting and cultural activities.

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking the action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This policy is intended to provide clear direction about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child protection issues. It makes explicit the School's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which acts in the best interests of the child. All staff must be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Birchfield School implements this policy and these procedures to safeguard children in accordance with agreed inter-agency procedure with Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP). It is published on the School website: www.birchfieldschool.co.uk. Paper copies may also be requested.

The policy aims :

- To raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse anywhere in the School from Reception upwards
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting concerns
- To provide guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse
- To provide a framework for inter-agency communication and effective liaison
- To identify strategies and interventions available to support children at risk
- To fulfil and set out procedures for other safeguarding and welfare arrangements

Our School fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. We believe that children have the right to be protected from harm. The core elements to our policy are:

- Prevention (positive school atmosphere, teaching and pastoral care, pupil support)
- Protection (by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns)
- Child-centred support (pupils/school staff and pupils who may have been abused)

Separate policies cover:

- Acceptable Use of Technology Policy for Pupils
- Anti-bullying Strategy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Missing or Lost Child Policy
- Pupil Withdrawal Policy
- Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy (hard copies can be provided to parents upon request)
- Staff Code of Conduct, including Acceptable Use of Technology for Staff, Allegations against Staff, Low-Level Concerns Policy and Whistleblowing (hard copies can be provided to parents upon request)
- Staff Disciplinary Policy

- Staff Induction Policy
- Use of Restraint Policy
- Code of Conduct for the School Minibus

This policy follows guidelines in:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) (KCSIE)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)
- Information sharing (July 2018)
- Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (September 2023)
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018)
- Filtering and Monitoring Standards (DfE – March 2023)

Everyone employed by Birchfield School has a responsibility in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children throughout Reception upwards. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to carry out this role effectively, staff should make sure that their approach is child-centred and always in the **best interests** of the child. Each member of staff has 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, where support can be provided as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. In the first instance, any concerns or early help requirements should be discussed with a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy) who are the person/s most likely to have the full safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on safeguarding concerns. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies further to a referral. Staff are reminded that members of staff could possibly be involved in legal proceedings if matters of this nature are ignored or not dealt with appropriately. However, members of staff who report such matters in good faith will not be subject to disciplinary action if allegations are subsequently discovered to be unfounded.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

Birchfield School has two Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) who take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection duties (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). The DSL will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care. The Designated Safeguarding Leads (and their deputy) are a member of the Senior Management Team.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are:

Mrs A. Ackerley (Head of Prep School)
 NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training: 03.03.2024
 Shropshire LCSB Child Protection Raising Awareness Training – 08.09.2023
 SSCP Designated Safeguarding Lead Update Training – 05.02.2024
 Prevent Referrals – 22.01.2024
 Prevent Awareness – 22.01.2024
 PMAP course – 21.02.2024

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

Mrs P. Mellor (Head of Senior School) –
 NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training - 21.03.2024
 Shropshire LCSB Child Protection Raising Awareness Training – 5.9.2023
 SSCP Designated Safeguarding Lead Update Training – 2.10.23
 Prevent Referrals – 19.02.2024
 Prevent Awareness – 22.01.2024
 PMAP course – 27.02.24

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and with Responsibility for Early Years is:

Mrs A. Jones (Headmistress) –
NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training: 22.8.22
Shropshire LCSB Child Protection Raising Awareness Training – 5.9.22
SSCP Designated Safeguarding Lead Update Training – 5.12.23

Nominated Lead for the Prevent Strategy is :

Mrs A Jones (Headmistress)
WRAP: Prevent Training – 15.02.2024
Home Office Prevent Referrals Certificate 4.5.23
PMAP course – 21.02.24

Safeguarding Adviser - Advisory Committee:

Sir Michael Griffiths
Raising Awareness in Safeguarding and Child Protection 09.11.23

The DSL role includes the principal responsibility within the School for safeguarding including the review of policies which should be at least annually and with the Safeguarding Adviser with minutes taken and providing updates to all full-time, part-time, voluntary and non-teaching staff as appropriate. It is, however, made clear that even though some responsibilities may be delegated to a deputy, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding lies with them. A description of this role appears later in this document. The Heads of Prep and Senior Schools, are the designated members of staff with lead responsibility for Safeguarding (DSL) throughout the School. The Deputy DSL, Mrs A Jones, has responsibility for the Early Years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual child protection concerns are dealt with in accordance with the guidance and regulations
- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) First Point of Contact Team (FPOC) in accordance with their procedures
- Ensure that she is aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and will keep the members of the Advisory Committee, all staff, contractors and volunteers informed as appropriate
- Receive appropriate training in child protection matters (including the Prevent Duty) and inter-agency working, to include both national/local bodies, at least every two years
- Ensure updated training is in place for the DSL, DDSL and all staff in order that they can fully understand their roles in filtering and monitoring
- Ensure that all staff, contractors and volunteers have access to and understand their role as appropriate in the child protection procedures, including but not limited to part-time staff, supply staff, peripatetic staff, newly appointed staff, newly qualified staff, before/after school care staff, holiday club, volunteers, office staff, catering staff, cleaning staff and caretakers
- Act as a focal point of any reporting procedure for concerns of abuse involving children and/or other members of staff as well as acting as a point of contact for other agencies
- Update their skills and knowledge regularly and pass new information on to staff
- Act as a source of advice and support within the school and coordinate action regarding referrals in relation to both children and allegations against staff
- Ensure that child protection files are transferred to a new school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. They will also ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt. The DSL will liaise with the SENCO, as required

SHROPSHIRE'S SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP (SSCP)

Shropshire Safeguarding First Point of Contact Team (FPOC)

Tel: 0345 678 9021

Out of Hours Tel: 0345 678 9040

www.shropshire.gov.uk/early-help

Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership

Contact: Emma Harding and Jane Parsons

Shropshire Council Room GN94 Ground Floor, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate

Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Tel 01743 254259 or for Emma Harding 01743 257929

<http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/>

(Contact details for neighbouring areas appear at the end of this policy)

Useful Organisations

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231, Childline: 0800 1111, NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

MULTI AGENCY WORKING

Schools have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and new safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements are now in place. The Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) comprises three key safeguarding partners in a multi-agency approach : Local Authority, the chief of police for a local force and the Clinical Commissioning Group. SSCP acts in an independent role to seek assurance, scrutinise, challenge and support the multi-agency partnerships in Shropshire in safeguarding children. The partnership specifically consists of the Director of Children's Services (Shropshire Council), Director of Adult Services (Shropshire Council), Chief Superintendent of Police (West Mercia Police), Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience (Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group), Independent Chair and Safeguarding Partnership Business Manager. The three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The School references multi-agency working with all partners in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and works in close partnership with the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership. We work with key partners in the following ways:

- Staff are trained in local protocols, including music peripatetic teachers and clubs staff
- Our Named First Aider works with counselling representatives from CAMHs, Bee U
- A commitment to engage in Child Protection conferences and Early Help Meetings
- Early Help newsletter to keep abreast of service offers
- Regular visit to the SSCP website for 'What's New?', West Midlands Procedures Manual
- Use of the SSCP website to engage with multi-agency training for the DSL and other staff
- Regular communication to seek advice from Emma Harding and Jane Parsons
- Reading of the Child Death Reviews and SCR review reports and 'Pathways to Harm'
- Engagement with the LADO to seek advice in respect of any concerns raised
- Access by the DSL to the School Safeguarding Online drop in sessions
- Use of assessment tools when needed : child exploitation, West Midlands Domestic Abuse Pathway template
- Close working with local authority on Missing Children information and follow up
- Awareness of Shropshire 2020-2023 Neglect Strategy and screening tool
- Use of CEOP and Think U Know resources for online safety awareness
- We are presently looking into engagement with Operation Encompass to link with the project with the police and social care

TRAINING OF THE DESIGNATED LEAD, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Birchfield School will ensure that the DSLs and other nominated personnel for Child Protection will attend training relevant to the role. This will cover inter-agency working, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, record-keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children. Support will be available for staff from the DSLs in the first instance where there are concerns or queries about child protection. The School's arrangements for the training are as follows:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy DSL) - will receive specific refresher training (Child protection training update : Experienced designated staff) for their role at least every two years and the DSL will attend local and district area Safeguarding Conferences organised through Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership via the Shropshire Learning Gateway. The DSL also receives regular updated training in such areas as Child Sexual Exploitation, Online Safety, Prevent Strategy and Safer Recruitment as well as other areas in line with the latest guidance through the Educare modules. The DSLs and Deputy DSL receive training to the same level in safeguarding practice.

Training for all Staff, including new joiners -

All staff are trained in child protection (Raising Awareness of Child Protection) on a regular basis with formal training every three years (most recently 5th September 2022, including a Prevent update), as required by Shropshire's Safeguarding Partnership. (Additional training for staff is provided on an annual basis through Educare refresher modules). Training also includes online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. In addition, staff are given informal updates on safeguarding and child protection matters as required, but at least annually, via such means as emails, staff meetings, assessments and in person training. The school is signed up to the Educare programme and staff are required to pass regular assessments in modules on different areas of safeguarding e.g Child on child Abuse, Online Safety and Sexual Violence. All staff receive information about the early help process, local Prevent strategy and receive the relevant sections of the latest Part One, Annex A and B as appropriate (September 2023) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (updated December 2023) document with it to explain their role. All staff are made aware how to make a referral to children's social services for statutory assessments under the Children's Act 1989 and know the role they may need to play in such assessments. Care is taken to understand that staff **understand** and discharge their role through staff briefings and a questionnaire quiz for all staff to complete subsequent to training by the DSL.

All staff, including temporary staff, contractors and volunteers as well as members of the Advisory Committee if relevant, are provided with an induction pack (Welcome Pack) via hard copies to be signed once read and induction tutors are assigned for new members of staff (members of the Senior Management Team) who are detailed to discuss the key points of the policy as part of the induction programme. The induction programme is followed through point by point and completed by the Induction Tutor, then copied for the staff files. The Welcome Pack which is handed to each member of staff includes : Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use of Technology and the Whistleblowing Policy and further key policies are given to staff as part of access to the school network : Missing or Lost Children Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Practice. In addition, staff receive copies of Parts One and Five as well as Annex A and B of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) document as well as a guidance sheet relating to local protocols including Prevent. The induction process makes clear information about the role of the DSL, their identity and that of any deputies. This is either sent out prior to a new staff member taking up role or electronic access enabled, where possible, or prioritized immediately upon arrival for supply staff. Staff induction includes health and safety issues, safeguarding and child protection, information about emergency evacuation procedures and help in understanding roles and responsibilities. In addition :

- Staff have received training on the Prevent Duty in September 2022 from the SSCP as part of the ongoing safeguarding training programme as well as updates on local Prevent protocols.
- The Welcome Pack cover sheet personalises training for staff depending upon their role and prioritises Safeguarding and Online Safety training for all

- Staff are regularly reminded of Whistleblowing procedures in staff training and policies
- The DSL feeds back to staff further to attendance at District Safeguarding Network Meetings.
- All visitors receive Safeguarding and Welcome Leaflets detailing safeguarding practices within School and specifying the name of the DSL.
- Posters also appear around the School with photographs of the Safeguarding Team, DSLs, Deputy DSL and the Safeguarding Advisory so that new staff, supply staff, parents and visitors can identify the relevant people to contact.
- The roles of the DSL and DDSL are outlined in full at the end of the Safeguarding Policy, but also explained by the DSL at each start of term meeting in staff briefings

To ensure that staff know procedures in an emergency, posters are placed at strategic points around the School, the staffroom and Medical Room, detailing the Shropshire First Point of Contact information as well as contact numbers for other neighbouring areas.

Staff should take care to ensure that they are only left alone with an individual child when absolutely necessary, and appropriate measures are taken and arrangements for the supervision of PE changing taken into account as well as for peripatetic music provision. Extra in-house supervision is offered for all after-School clubs involving Early Years children, where appropriate, and each club is risk assessed termly.

SCHOOL COMMITMENT – KEEPING PUPILS SAFE

We recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. Our School will therefore work to ensure that the pupils know ways to keep themselves safe by putting in place the following systems:

- **Establish and maintain a positive ethos where pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.** Photographs of the Safeguarding Team are displayed around school and pupils can use Communication Boxes to share any worries which are then followed up by their Form Tutors. Safety at school surveys are carried out regularly and results analysed by the Assistant Head and Head of Computing. 'THINK' posters guide older pupils into recognising how they can show respect to and tolerance of others. The NSPCC helpline number is also posted in classrooms and discussed to report concerns relating to sexual harassment or abuse. Pupils and parents are also encouraged to share with staff any issues outside of school which are also troubling them and pupils are reassured that these will be listened to
- **Ensure that pupils feel that there are adults in the School who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.** Posters around the School advise pupils from the Reception class upwards who they can speak to if they are worried or sad and this includes access to Childline, by phone or online, and an independent listener who is known to the School. Personal tutors for senior pupils, mentors for key pupils and the school's trained Mental Health First Aid staff member are on hand to listen to pupils in a programme led by the Head of Prep and Head of Senior School. Pupils in the Senior School are offered regular welfare sessions with a staff member of their choice. External counselling contacts can also be given to parents who request further guidance and when the situation demands
- **Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE/RSE and Computing, which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.** NSPCC Safeguarding Assemblies offer opportunities for pupils to address key topics and discuss any worries afterwards with a teacher. The PSHE and RSE programmes of study include relationships education e.g consent, sexual harassment, dispelling negative gender attitudes as well as safety taught by specialist teachers. Pupils are guided as to appropriate dress for non-uniform days and are taught that inappropriate banter is not tolerated. In Computing, online safety is introduced at the start of each year at an age-appropriate level and repeats throughout annual planning. Safer Internet Day offers an annual opportunity to refresh key knowledge. Guidance for remote learning safety, safe online learning and the code of conduct is shared with pupils and discussed in class
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies

- Ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
- Ensure that child protection files are transferred securely between Schools and obtain a receipt if it is the transferring School

Checking Pupil Absence and Attendance:

Absence of all pupils is checked on a daily basis by the office staff who make telephone contact with the parents to enquire about unauthorised absence on the first day of absence. This is then noted on the School's management information system and absence sheets are printed off daily for checking. Absence is discussed daily between the Headmistress and her Personal Assistant, who then follows up on any queries with the DSL, as appropriate and action may include a home visit. For continued absence where parents have made no contact with the school, contact will be made with the parents by the Head of Prep or Head of Senior School, as appropriate, or office staff and concerns followed up. Concerns over attendance or late arrival may be discussed further with the parents at a separate meeting or when pupils' attendance is markedly low over the school year. The Headmistress' Personal Assistant will monitor such data and keep the Headmistress informed. The School will adhere to its legal duty to work jointly with the local authority when making reasonable enquiries where a pupil is absent for 10 days following on from a period of approved leave or is absent for 20 consecutive days without approved leave. Reference should also be made to the separate Pupil Withdrawal Policy for information about who to contact.

Pupil Admission and Leavers

In accordance with local authority (SSCP) procedure, the Headmistress' Personal Assistant will complete either a Non-Standard Transitional Point Starter or Leaver Form, as appropriate, for any pupil joining or leaving the school outside of the standard months of September and July respectively. This should arrive at the Shropshire Council Education Access Service within five days of a pupil joining or leaving the school at such times and their name added to the joiners'/leavers' register with all relevant information will be provided to meet safeguarding requirements. Confirmation of notification will then be filed in the pupil file. The School will seek every means possible to ascertain details of future Schools for pupils leaving the School. For information on procedures for leavers or Children Missing from Education (CME) or home, refer to Specific Safeguarding Issues below or the school's separate Pupil Withdrawal Policy. If Birchfield School has concerns about children's safety or welfare, they will notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. The School will report historical abuse allegations to the police.

PART ONE: SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION FOR ALL STAFF

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

Everyone in the school who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School members of staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. All members of staff at Birchfield School form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. Birchfield School will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Mrs Annette Anckerley, Head of Prep School and Mrs Pascale Mellor, Head of Senior School, are the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and will provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as the Shropshire's Safeguarding Partnership following a disclosure and when necessary.

THE ROLE OF ALL SCHOOL STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The *Teacher Standards 2012* state that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. At Birchfield School the role is extended to all members of staff. All members of staff, also including full and part-time staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers, are advised that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

is **everyone's** responsibility and that no single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. Hence, every member of staff who comes into contact with the pupils and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. All members of staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed. Staff should reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, are supported and kept safe and never feel that they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for making a report.

In addition to working with the designated safeguarding lead, all members of staff should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children. Birchfield School encourages an environment where all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role. Staff who work in close one-to-one teaching situations, in performing arts and sport should take particular care and follow the advice given in the Staff Code of Conduct. The School recognises the expertise built by staff in undertaking safeguarding training and staff are given opportunities to contribute to shaping policy on safeguarding in the School at termly meetings and invited to share their ideas at Senior Management Team meetings and in staff briefings.

WHAT STAFF NEED TO KNOW

All members of staff at Birchfield School should be aware of systems within the School which support safeguarding. These are explained to new staff as part of the staff induction programme. All members of staff receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated every three years in line with SSCP guidance; the last whole School training being delivered in September 2022. Further interim training may be offered in Educare modules and local protocols, as appropriate depending on the role. Staff are encouraged to draw upon the key principles of safeguarding as drawn up by the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership, based upon the Right Service at the Right Time model :

- Always see the child first
- 'Doing nothing is not an option'
- Do with, not to, others
- Do the simple things better
- Have conversations, build relationships
- Outcomes not outputs.

Use of Appropriate Terminology – the term 'victim' is used within this policy, but staff should be aware that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Staff should be considerate of using the term with which the individual is most comfortable. Similarly, staff should take care when using the terminology of 'perpetrator' or 'alleged perpetrator' in front of children, not least because in some case the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. Staff should determine what terminology is appropriate on a case by case basis.

EARLY HELP PROCEDURE

Staff are informed that Early Help measures should always be followed in School to ensure that a child's needs are identified and acted upon as quickly as possible. They are encouraged to listen to the concerns of the pupils and seek advice as to whether further action is required. Early Help allows for a pupil to receive help at any age, not solely in the Early Years classes, at the right level of support and at the earliest opportunity possible. Staff should remain alert to any pupil who may benefit from early intervention and report concerns to the DSL who will generally take the lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment if appropriate will advise further and may seek advice from the Early Help Team within Shropshire's Local Authority. Teachers will work with the DSL and agencies in preparation of an assessment, if needed. Members of staff are informed that they should not keep any information, however seemingly minor in importance, to themselves as such information could contribute to a whole picture of a child which could lead to their enhanced safety and protection.

In addition, individual pupils may be offered a mentor in School and a Pastoral Care Plan may be created in order to support the pupil, including those with an EHC plan. The Head of Senior acts as a mentor, where necessary, to set up regular meetings to listen to the concerns of affected pupils and liaises with the DSL and parents and staff, as appropriate. Individual class teachers meet regularly to discuss any pupils who may show signs of concern.

WHAT STAFF SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR

All members of staff should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of early help or protection. They should be aware that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside the school as well as inside and outside of home and online. Staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues with children at risk of abuse online, face to face and offline and these can happen concurrently. Children can abuse other children online which can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images linked to chat groups and the sharing of abusive image and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

Staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse in situations outside their home as they can be vulnerable to extra-familial harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse including harassment and exploitation, domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for are key to early identification of abuse and neglect and staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- 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
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is deliberately missing school
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or criminal or sexual exploitation;
- has a family member in prison
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol abuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- has returned home to their family from care
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is persistently absent from education
- is at risk of 'so called' honour-based abuse such as FGM or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a **professional curiosity** and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

If staff members are unsure of any part of the guidance or wish to discuss something related to it, they should **always** speak to the DSL (or Deputy if the DSL is unavailable/off site). Members of staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and ensure

that their approach is always child centred. When concerned about the welfare of a child, members of staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child. They should be aware of the importance of record-keeping and speak to the DSL if they are unsure how to record an incident.

There are various expert sources of advice on the signs of abuse and neglect. Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership is able to advise on useful material, including training options. One good source of advice is provided on the NSPCC website. Types of abuse and neglect, and examples of specific safeguarding issues, are described later in this section.

WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD AND IF A CHILD MIGHT NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM ONE OR MORE AGENCIES

If a member of staff has concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they should :

- act upon them immediately
- log their thoughts on CPOMs
- should speak to a DSL (or Deputy if the DSLs are unavailable/off site)
- follow the school's Safeguarding Policy. This also includes situations of abuse which may involve staff members

Depending on the circumstances, action may be taken to manage any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes, proceed with an early help assessment or make a referral for statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm. The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding leads (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or Deputy if the DSL is unavailable/off site) as soon as is practically possible. Staff should not assume a colleague will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse. The school has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. The school will, among other obligations, be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe. The Data Protection Act 2018 and 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. Information sharing should also include principles for sharing information with other schools and colleges as well as with the three safeguarding partners, as required.

Staff must have due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share (and withhold) information, as provided in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share the 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 schools, 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 schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR. Where in doubt, schools should seek independent legal advice. Reference should be made to the Data Protection: toolkit for schools issued by the DfE

Where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. 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 victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Staff should follow the seven golden rules for sharing information, as detailed in the DfE's Information Sharing document updated in July 2018 to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018:

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles)
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose

The safeguarding lead will make a referral to SSCP for their advice, but **it is important to note that any staff member can refer their concerns to local authority children's social care, specialist or early help services directly, including use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team Around the Child (TAC) approaches.** If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, it is important to inform the DSL as soon as practicably possible.

The local authority will make a decision within one day of the referral and contact the referrer, but in the absence of a response, the School should contact the local authority. If, further to that decision, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL/referrer should press for re-consideration.

The importance of acting on and referring the early signs of abuse and neglect, keeping clear records, listening to the views of the child, reassessing concerns when situations do not improve, sharing

information quickly and challenging in action are the key to children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating.

All staff should be aware of the process of what to do if a child informs them that they are being neglected or abused. It is important that they maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with relevant professionals such as the DSL or Local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise that they will not tell anyone about an allegation - as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency (for example education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment using the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership processes. These assessments will identify what help the child and family require, preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs coordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Such situations may involve early help, inter-agency assessment and intervention using local processes, including use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team Around the Child (TAF) approaches.

WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD HAS SUFFERED OR IS LIKELY TO SUFFER OR IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER/AT RISK OF HARM

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local authority's referral process. Whereas decisions to seek support for a child would normally be taken in consultations with parents and pupils, consent is not required for a referral where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, it is important to inform the DSL as soon as possible. For pupils considered as being at risk of radicalisation, the School will consider the individual level of risk to identify the most appropriate point of referral, which may include Channel or Local authority children's social care.

The local authority should make a decision, within one working day of a referral being made, about the type of response that is required and should let the referrer know the outcome. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- whether the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17
- 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
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services; and
- further specialist assessments are required in order to help the local authority to decide what further action to take

TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Further reference can be made to *What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is being Abused - Advice for Practitioners* or the NSPCC website. Neglect forms part of the Toxic Trio for the SSCP and a Graded Care Profile tool is available to support schools. Teachers are advised to be careful to identify examples of disguised compliance where families appear to be working with the team but in fact are working against it for their own gain. Physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect of children does occur, and we need to be watchful for signs of such abuse from Reception upwards. Signs/indicators of abuse and neglect are helpful if they are used with some caution. They are not necessarily evidence of abuse or neglect. However, if you are concerned about a child or young person, they can help you think about why you have that concern. Please note that these lists are possible indicators of abuse and are not exhaustive. Any signs of abuse have to be considered in context. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting all put children in danger.

DEFINITIONS OF CATEGORIES OF ABUSE AND SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE

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

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional community by those known to them, or more rarely, by others such as via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults or 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. Signs that may suggest physical abuse include

- Multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- Bruising of different colours indicating repeated injuries
- Fingertip bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- Burns of any shape or size
- An injury for which there is no adequate explanation

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

- Children whose parents are over-critical and emotionally distant, or who are unable to meet their child's emotional needs
- Children whose behaviour is excessive. For example, excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking, head banging
- Children who self-harm, for example, they may cut or scratch themselves or overdose
- Children who attempt suicide
- Children who persistently run away from home
- Children who show high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- Children who usually seek out or avoid affection

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

- Something a child has told you
- Something a child has told someone else
- A child who shows worrying sexualised behaviour in play or with other children
- A child who seems to have inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age
- A child visiting/being looked after by a known or suspected sexual offender

Behavioural signs of possible sexual abuse:

- A fear of certain places, people or activities, especially being alone with certain people
- Reluctance to undress
- Excessive crying
- Avoids touch
- Drastic change in School performance
- Self-mutilation
- Mental health
- Missing Children and Adults Strategy
- Private fostering
- Radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting
- Trafficking

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

- Squalid, unhygienic, or dangerous home conditions
- Parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs
- Children who appear persistently undersized or underweight
- Children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy
- Children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision
- Failing to provide suitable or adequate clothing and provisions for food

Contextual Safeguarding : Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. If a referral is to be made to local authority children's social care for an assessment, where children are being harmed in contexts outside the school, the school should provide as much information as possible to aid the referral process. All staff, but especially the DSL (or deputy) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitations in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Local authority children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug-taking, and/or alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence including that linked to county lines, radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images can be signs that children are at risk. Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical

support on specific safeguarding issues. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of. Further information is included in Annex B and issued to all staff to be read alongside the detail laid out below.

Child-on-child Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen inside and outside of school and online and understand the school's policies on this and the important role they have to play in it. They should understand that even if there are no reports of it in school that this does not mean it is not happening as it may not be being reported. If staff have **any** concerns, they should speak to their DSL or Deputy. Staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature and that downplaying certain behaviours such as dismissing sexual harassment as 'just banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

The Safeguarding Adviser will work with the Advisory Committee and Proprietor to ensure that procedures are in place to minimise the risk of child on child abuse, that systems are easily understood for children to confidently report abuse and that all child on child abuse cases are unacceptable and will be treated seriously.

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

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- 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, which may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence
- Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals which may include an online element

Procedures to minimise risk of abuse : The School will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by close supervision of pupils at all times and adherence to its Behaviour and Discipline Policy and its Anti-Bullying Strategy, with examples of good behaviours and positive reinforcement celebrated in School. Assemblies and workshops are held to deal with issues such as cyber-bullying, gender-based issues and conflict resolution. A comprehensive programme of study in Computing/PSHE teaches pupils how to deal with and recognise inappropriate use of the internet and social media e.g cases of sexting (also known as the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos). Furthermore, the RSE programme of study module on 'Being Safe' introduces balanced, but open discussion around personal privacy, respect and consent and an understanding of misogyny for older pupils. Through RSE, senior pupils discuss how their actions, as innocent as they may be, can make others feel such as walking too close to another pupil or making inappropriate or sexist remarks. Staff who teach RSE/PSHE should raise any concerns with the DSL which emerge from their teaching and pupils' comments and observations. The Head of Prep and Head of Senior School monitor any pupils where there are concerns and acts as a mentor, where needed. Regular individual pastoral meetings are set up with senior pupils to air their concerns with specific tutors with strong relationships formed to help pupil confidence. An NSPCC helpline, set up for this purpose, is also

shared with older pupils through RSE (Telephone Number: 0800 136 663). All pupils, however, are encouraged to share their concerns with any member of staff, for example, their Academic Tutors, Heads of House, Named First Aider. Ahead of 'non uniform days', pupils will be reminded by their Form Tutors to always dress smartly and appropriately for a school working environment e.g. no ripped jeans. Pastoral Care plans may also be created if appropriate, to enable us to work closely with families and pupils and offer support. Communication boxes are available in each classroom for pupils to share any concerns confidentially for the teacher to then follow up and keep the DSL informed. THINK posters are displayed around school which encourage an awareness of kind words and respecting others. Toilet areas also carry posters for all ages of children to encourage them to speak to their teachers if they feel sad, worried or concerned. A Safety at School survey carried out annually with all pupils allows the school to follow up on any trends and patterns. Finally, Rude, Mean, Bullying posters are widely displayed around school which indicate the process for reporting a concern, including the role of the bystander.

Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones into School (except with express parental permission for an emergency use or on a minibus journey) which helps to reduce the risk of abuse. Please refer to the Minibus Code of Conduct for storage of mobile phones during the school day. Parents are provided with guidance such as updates from CEOP in regular newsletters or news of harmful apps and digital games and are encouraged to speak to the DSL if they have any concerns.

Reporting and Recording: If a pupil reports abuse from another pupil or pupils, which exceeds the remit of the Anti-bullying or Behaviour Policy, the teacher should refer the incident to the Head of Senior or Head of Senior School as soon as possible to follow up. They should log any conversations and meetings precisely on CPOMs as soon as possible. A bullying incident will be regarded as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect 'that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' as in the case of sexualised abuse and verbal abuse by peers on peers. In such a case, a risk assessment (supported by advice from the relevant statutory authorities, as appropriate) will be carried out in order to ensure that both parties, perpetrator and victim, receive the appropriate support and that risk-based decision-making takes place. It may be necessary, for example, for an accused pupil to be removed from School for a period of time, or from certain classes or whether contact with certain individuals should be prevented or supervised or for counselling opportunities to be made available. In such an event, all pupils, whether victim or perpetrator, are treated as being 'at risk'.

Both the victim and the perpetrator will be offered support and the School will work with families involved. The school recognises that the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, any such abuse will be referred to the First Point of Contact Team (FPOC) on Telephone Number : 0345 678 9021.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE 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.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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 as perpetrators threaten victims (and their families)

with violence or entrap or coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife as 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. Boys and girls who are criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of 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. It can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited and for example believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships. All of these can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst **all** staff should speak to the DSL (or Deputy DSL) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM) there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

Mental Health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriate trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well-placed to observe children day to day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or at risk of developing one. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, logging their concerns on CPOMs and speaking to the DSL or Deputy as soon as possible. Referral may be made to the school's Named First Aider for Mental Health and any concerns should be logged on the Referral Form for her attention and follow up. Reference should also be made to the DfE guidance on Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools and Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing as well as the school's own separate policies on Mental Well-being and Suicide Safety. Public Health England (Rise Above Link) and Every Interaction Matters by the DfE offer useful resources for secondary pupils and should be referred to also for resources support to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. The mental health lead for the school is the Named First Aider who has received specific training in Mental Health First Aid and she liaises closely with the DSL and SENCo on pastoral follow up. Separate meetings are set up with other members of the Senior Management Team as needed to offer support. Staff should be aware that traumatic events in their past can impact a pupil's mental health as well as their attendance and progress at school.

Serious Violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children at risk from or those who are involved in serious violent crime. These may include 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 well-being, 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.

Additional Notes on Other Specific Safeguarding Issues – to be read alongside Annex B

CHILDREN POTENTIALLY AT GREATER RISK OF HARM

Children Who Need a Social Worker

Children may need a social worker to help them due to prior abuse, neglect or complex family circumstances and staff should be aware that experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as educationally disadvantaging them. The DSL will liaise with the local authority to share relevant information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child.

Children Absent or Missing from Education (CME)

A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues : neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation, particularly county lines. The school aims to support identifying such abuse, helping absent pupils to prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care, where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. The DSL will be kept informed if a pupil is repeatedly absent from school.

In this sense, absences are monitored carefully by the Headmistress' Personal Assistant who oversees the registers, with contact made for unauthorised pupil absence by her and the Headmistress informed of any concerns. (Page 8 on Checking Pupil Attendance outlines the school's procedure for this). The Head of the Senior School oversees the attendance figures for the senior pupils, following up on absence as necessary. Where reasonably possible, the School will hold two emergency contact numbers for each pupil, other than the parent, as a mark of good practice to give the school or college additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern. In line with the separate Pupil Withdrawal Policy which sets out contact details, the School will inform the local authority of any pupil who:

- is going to be removed from the admission register where the pupil has been taken out of School by their parents and written notification has been received that they are being educated outside the School system e.g. home education (*the SSCP EHE form should be used*)
- has ceased to attend School and no longer lives within a reasonable distance
- has been certified by a medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state to attend School
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order
- has been permanently excluded

In any of the above cases, the local authority will be informed when the School is to remove a pupil from its register within five days and in any event, no later than this time. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the Children Missing Education guidance or Shropshire Council Learning Gateway.

Elective Home Education (EHE) – where parents decide to home educate, the school expects that this is made with the child's best education at the heart of the process. When the school becomes aware of a decision to home school, the Headmistress will meet with the parents and other key

professionals e.g. Local Authority as appropriate ideally before a final decision is made. This is especially important where a child has SEND or a disability or has a social worker or is vulnerable or has a social worker.

Children Requiring Mental Health Support

Reference should also be made to the section on Mental Health above. The school recognises that it has an important role to play in supporting the mental wellbeing of its pupils and will put clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems. The Mental Health First Aider works closely with the Head of Prep and Head of Senior School and SENCo in supporting pupils and staff can fill in a referral form for her attention and follow up. Through its Pastoral Tutor system in the Senior School and Head of House support and teamed with a comprehensive programme of study in RSE, the school promotes resilience as part of a whole school approach.

Looked After Children

Appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. The designated safeguarding leads have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. The DSL acts as the person responsible for Looked After Children (LAC). The DSL will act as the designated teacher and will work with the Local Authority to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after or who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, child arrangement orders or who are adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or health issues

Children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Staff should be aware not to assume that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a pupil's condition without further exploration and that these children are more prone to peer group isolation or bullying than other children. Staff should also be aware that there is potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by such behaviours as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. Similarly, communication and cognitive understanding can place further barriers. It is important, therefore, that the DSL works closely with the SENCo.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, LGBT children can be targeted by others and, in some cases, a child who is perceived by others as LGBT, can be just as vulnerable. Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. A safe space in the shape of the medical room in Beamish House will offer the chance for them to speak out or share their concerns.

Preventing Radicalisation

Radicalisation can be explained as the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Birchfield School has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and follows guidance under the Prevent Duty guidance (statutory guidance for England and Wales, issued on 7 September 2023 under Section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. It came into force on 31 December 2023). The staff are trained and updated in areas of Prevent and radicalisation as part of their Safeguarding Awareness training delivered by SSCP. In order to meet its duty to the Prevent Strategy and to communicate and promote awareness, the School will:

Build resilience to radicalisation: The School actively promotes fundamental British values as part of broader requirements relating to the quality of education as well as the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This is further backed up by displays around School, reinforcing the values, and themed day links, for example in a series of assemblies given by the Headmistress. It is aware of its duty to forbid political indoctrination, but the need to secure a balanced presentation of

political issues with opportunities for discussion. In this way, it offers a forum for open discussion ensuring the School is a safe place to discuss sensitive issues.

Train Staff to raise awareness: For Early Years children, staff are advised to be alert to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child's life at home or elsewhere and be aware of possible harmful behaviour by other adults in the child's life. This takes place through PSED as well as ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes. The DSLs, Mrs Annette Ackerley and Mrs Pascale Mellor have received updated Prevent training and the DSL has received updates within safeguarding training also. The whole staff body were trained on 5th September 2022 (rebooked for September 2024) by SSCP (Emma Harding) explaining the Prevent Strategy and how to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, being alert to changes in their behaviour and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. The DSL also attends safeguarding update cluster conferences run by SSCP. A further update was given in September 2023 to staff with reminders in staff inset sessions on a termly basis and all new staff receive information relating to local Prevent strategies. Training has highlighted what radicalisation and extremism mean and why people may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism and also ways to identify children at risk. Staff with concerns about a pupil should speak urgently to a DSL and follow the standard safeguarding reporting procedure detailed in this policy. In addition, staff may take a Prevent Duty Educare module to support their understanding of the Channel programme which focuses upon providing early support to children who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

CHILD ON CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

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

The school will be aware of the importance of:

- Making it clear that there is zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'a part of growing up; or 'boys being boys'. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it
- Recognising, acknowledging and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported
- Challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. It is important that staff address inappropriate behaviours even if they appear relatively innocuous. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment may find the experience stressful and distressing and it may impact their educational attainment especially if the perpetrator/s attend the same school. Children who have experienced sexual violence display a wide range of responses, including some clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses or no overt signs at all. Staff should be aware that incidents may also happen outside the school as part of intimate personal relationships. It should be noted that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with special educational needs and disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers. All victims, however, should be taken seriously, supported and kept safe. A victim should never be made to feel they are creating a problem by

reporting an incident or feel ashamed for making a report. The school staff should be mindful to understand the scale of harassment and abuse and never downplay it for fear of creating a culture of unacceptable behaviour that normalises abuse.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence can happen both inside and outside of school and refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as follows:

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

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

Sexual Assault: a person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. A single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.

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

What is consent?

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

Also note that:

- A child under 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It can include:

- Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual 'jokes' or taunting
- Physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes. The school should consider carefully whether this crosses into sexual violence.
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence)
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence such as consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and

semi-nude images and/or videos, sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media, sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they are not comfortable with online.

Sexual harassment should be considered in broad terms. It creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB). HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can occur simultaneously between the two. When considering HSB, both ages and stages of development are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them e.g. the older child is disabled or small in stature. Children experiencing HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and should be offered appropriate support.

If required, the DSL should discuss the local response to sexual violence and harassment with the police and local authority children's social care colleagues in order to prepare the school's response. The DSL should also be confident of what local support is available, if needed. Local authority children's social care and the police will be important partners where a crime has been committed. The DSL should lead the school response and be aware of the local processes and how to make referrals. Agencies such as CEOP, NSPCC and UK Safer Internet Centre will be useful and contact details are available in Part Five of KCSIE.

Procedure for the Immediate Response to a Report

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Ultimately, any decisions are for the school or college to make on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as local authority children's social care and the police as required. It is important to understand that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. They can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. As reporting may not be easy for a child, the victim may not make a direct report but may tell a friend or a staff member may overhear a conversation or the child's own behaviour may indicate that something is wrong. Staff should never wait if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, but act on them immediately. The initial response by the school is incredibly important.

Staff should ensure that they are:

- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or local authority children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to
- recognising a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school or college staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust
- they should be supportive and respectful of the child; listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc.

- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes during the report (especially if a second member of staff is present). However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools and colleges should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by local authority children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation
- where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCCIS sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos) advice (for schools and colleges). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable
- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible; and informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider: the victim, especially their protection and support; the alleged perpetrator; and all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school. Risk assessments should be recorded and should be kept under review with decisions regularly reviewed, relevant policies updated to reflect lessons learnt and patterns of behaviours reflected upon. Considerations should always be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur and if further staff training is required. Where a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, the DSL should consider whether the person who made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. A referral to social care may then be appropriate and the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate.

ACTION FOLLOWING A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE/HARASSMENT

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school or college's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the needs and wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. The victim should be able to continue with their normal daily experience so that the school is a safe place for them
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- the ages and developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk for further abuse. Schools should be aware that a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and the alleged perpetrator
- the victim should never be made to feel that they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them and this should be explained in a way which avoids alarming or distressing them
- consider the proportionality of the response so that support is tailored on a case by case basis

Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted). Sexual assault may result in a range of health needs including physical, mental and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. In this event, the NHS and Sexual Assault Referral Centre can be accessed for support. The school takes the position that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Children Sharing a Classroom

Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim and those in close proximity with the alleged perpetrator. Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with local authority children's social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The school should also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport to and from the school, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator. The wishes of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school or college will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

Considering confidentiality and anonymity

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies. The victim may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under GDPR which applies. Advice should be sought from the DSL who should consider:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to the local authority children's social care
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where such a report is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare rather than a criminal approach in such cases.

Ultimately, the DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the DSL decides to go ahead with a referral, this should be handled extremely carefully, the reasons explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support offered. A risk assessment is then carried out.

Where an allegation of sexual violence or harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school should be aware of the anonymity, witness support and criminal process so that they can offer support. The school will do all it reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or harassment and should also consider the impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

Managing the Report

The school will treat each report on a case-by-case basis and will consider carefully when to inform the alleged perpetrator. Where a report is going to be made to local authority children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the school will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator will be informed of the allegations. However, this does not stop the school taking immediate action to safeguard their children, where required. The school may consider managing a report in the following ways:

I. Manage internally - In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention

and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.

2. Early help - the school may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

3. Referrals to local authority children's social care

- Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to local authority children's social care
- At the referral to local authority children's social care stage, the school will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of local authority children's social care
- If a referral is made, local authority children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services
- Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) will work alongside, and cooperate with, the relevant lead social worker
- the school will wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a local authority children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children. It is important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with local authority children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school or college takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator, any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report and all children at the school or college should be immediate
- In some cases, local authority children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support

4. Reporting to the Police

- Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to local authority children's social care (as above)
- It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) is clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains
- At this stage, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of local authority children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies
- Where a report has been made to the police, the school or college should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) should be aware of their local arrangements

Whatever the school's response, it should be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions

and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic). The school will work closely with the police in respect of any possible bail conditions and should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children.

At the end of the criminal process, if a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in light of their behaviour policy. If the perpetrator remains in the same school as the victim, the school or college should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school and the school will work to ensure that both the victim and alleged perpetrator remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online). In cases where there is no further action, the school will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary.

Ongoing response - Safeguarding and supporting the victim

The school may seek the support of Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) to provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), Rape Crisis Centres who provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence and/or the Internet Watch Foundation (to potentially remove illegal images).

It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged with victims and the school will ask if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult (for example, their form tutor or DSL) to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's and the school will respect and support this choice. The victim may wish to withdraw from lessons and activities although the school will be mindful of not isolating the victim. A separate physical space may be provided for as long as is needed. The school will do all it reasonably can to protect the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made. Alternative provision or a move to another school will be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim (and following discussion with their parents or carers). The school via the DSL will ensure that any new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs, discuss with the victim and, where appropriate their parents or carers as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the child protection file.

Ongoing Considerations: Victim and alleged perpetrator sharing classes

Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. Close liaison with the police is essential. Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school will take suitable action, if they have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils). Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school will consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases. In all cases, the school will record and be able to justify its decision-making.

Supporting the alleged perpetrator(s) and young people/children who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour

Schools can discipline pupils whose behaviour falls below the standard expected of them and disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police or local authority children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating does not in itself prevent a school

from coming to its own conclusion and imposing a penalty accordingly. Support should be provided simultaneously to the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator and parents involved in the school's approach, unless it would put a child at additional risk. The school should meet with the victim's and perpetrator's parents separately as a matter of good practice and these meetings should be attended by the DSL.

The following principles should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- on the one hand, the school needs to safeguard the victim and provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education and safeguarding support and implement any disciplinary actions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions and can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary
- Consider the age and developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature and frequency of the allegations as an allegation will inevitably cause stress
- Consider the proportionality of the response as the perpetrator(s) may have unmet needs as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children
- Perpetrators should be given the correct support to try to stop them re-offending and to address any underlying trauma so intervention on a case-by-case basis is important

Consideration should also be given to supporting children who have witnessed sexual violence and the fact that some children may take 'sides'. The school will work to ensure that both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are not being bullied or harassed particularly on school transport where they are more vulnerable.

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

The DSL will advise on the follow up response based on their understanding of the wider picture and : the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed, the nature of the alleged incident and whether a crime has been committed, the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, if the incident is one-off or as part of a pattern of sustained abuse, understanding of familial harms to support siblings and any ongoing risks to the victim. **Immediate** consideration should be given to how best support the victim and the alleged perpetrator.

Work in partnership with other agencies and share information:

The DSL will work closely with other agencies such as SSCP, the Early Help Team at Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership and Emma Harding, the Schools Safeguarding Officer with responsibility for the Prevent Strategy, ensuring that information is appropriately shared. Staff should follow normal reporting procedures, as detailed in this policy, when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. They should be mindful to 'Notice, Check and Share' any observations with a colleague and/or the DSL who will then follow up on their behalf. Staff should make a written note or use the pupil disclosure form, as appropriate, but should always share even the smallest concern to a colleague or the DSL. Contact details in respect of reporting concerns are listed in the Important Contact Details List at the end of this document.

The School will engage with parents and families as necessary as they are considered to be in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation and it will point them to suitable support mechanisms. Although decisions to seek support for a child about whom there are concerns relating to radicalisation are normally taken in consideration with parents and pupils in line with local procedure, parental consent is not required for a referral when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm.

Online Safety

The School is aware that children must be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material and that access to the internet can increase instances of sexual harassment, bullying and the controlling of others via smart technology. It therefore has a whole school approach to online safety to protect and educate pupils and staff in their use of technology which puts in place measures

to identify, intervene and escalate any incident as and where appropriate. The School ensures that it is doing all that it reasonably can to limit pupils' exposure to risk from inappropriate access to the four risk areas:

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

Remote Education

Procedures are in place to help keep pupils and students safe when learning remotely. The school will ensure that it remains in contact with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and to help them understand how the school monitors and uses filters to track online use. Information to parents should be clear of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who they will be interacting with online. The Head of Computing will oversee this monitoring process and liaise with staff.

Reviewing and Management of Online Safety

A risk assessment is produced, drawing upon UKCCIS guidance and with reference to the '4 Cs' above, and reviewed annually by the Head of Computing along with IT consultants to the school and the Senior Management Team to consider and reflect upon the risks pupils face.

Filters and Monitoring

The School takes its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children seriously and does what it reasonably can to limit children's exposure to risk. As a result, the school purchases additional security to the router, which acts as a web filter (Smoothwall Filtering) to bar inappropriate sites. Google Safe Search has been installed on all machines and pupils receive Online Safety training through the ICT curriculum as well as overlap with PSHE.

Teaching Online Safety

The School has separate policies for the Acceptable Use of Technology by Pupils and by Staff (within the Staff Code of Conduct) and ensures that pupils are never left unsupervised when using a device e.g. a laptop, tablet. Further information on online safety appears in Appendix I relating to the process in respect of remote learning.

Online safety is taught to pupils as part of the school's curriculum. A permanent display in the ICT Suite informs pupils of ways to stay safe. Pupils are advised to report any incidents to their teacher immediately. A warning screen has been added as an extra alert for pupils and staff in the event of inappropriate access. The School is aware of the importance of providing the necessary filters and monitoring systems, but also mindful that measures do not 'over block' which would lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what the pupils can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding. Mobile phones and other electronic devices from home are not permitted in school which helps the school to manage risk in pupils controlling, bullying or harassing others or sharing indecent images through their smart technology. A separate online safety risk assessment is available.

Computing planning includes regular topics related to online safety across the years and older pupils are taught to understand the risks posed to them by adults who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people. Pupils with access to iPads sign a safe use agreement on an annual basis, which is read to them and discussed in class. The DSL reviews and supports the planning for Computing to ensure that teaching is aligned with and considered part of the overarching

safeguarding approach. Monitoring of online safety and curriculum planning are planned and reviewed by the ICT Coordinator in liaison with the school's IT Consultant. Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones into School except with the express advance permission of the Headmistress or with parental permission for use on the school minibus (please refer to Mobile Device and Cameras and Minibus Code of Conduct policy).

Filtering and Monitoring Standards

The school works closely with the Network Manager and Head of Computing on an ongoing basis and has regard to the DfE's Filtering and Monitoring Standards document (March 2023) by:

- identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- reviewing filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- Having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet safeguarding needs

Please refer to the school's Filtering and Monitoring Procedure set out at the end of this policy.

Information Security and Access Management

The school works on an ongoing basis to provide an appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners. It will review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

Staff Training – Online Safety

Staff undertake regular Online Safety training, including an understanding of their roles in filtering and monitoring, covering cyberbullying and sexting and parents receive publications such as parents' guides from www.thinkuknow.co.uk with regular newsletters, as appropriate, or are invited to talks in-house. Annex D of Keeping Children Safe in Education offers resources and information relating to online safety and is issued to the ICT Coordinator regularly.

Sexting/Sharing of Consensual and Non-Consensual Images :

Whilst mobile phones are not allowed in School (except with parental permission on a school minibus journey), the programme of study for Computing/PSHE includes treatment of the subject of 'sexting' and the dangers it brings. The term 'sexting' for most young people relates to the sharing and writing of explicit messages and the consensual and non-consensual sharing of imagery (nude and semi-nude) with people they know, but may also include people they do not know. Any disclosures will be reported immediately to the DSL who will follow guidance from [Sexting in Schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people](#) and Shropshire Children's Community Partnership. Parents will be informed at an early stage in the process, unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm. Any cases of disclosure relating specifically to youth produced sexual imagery will be taken very seriously and will be referred to SSCP in the first instance for advice or the police if there is concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Relationships Education – pupils are introduced to how to lead healthy relationships, avoid conflict and identify positions of imbalance through their Personal, Social and Health Education in each year. The PSHE Coordinator will support staff in accessing resources for secondary RSE through Teaching Online Safety in Schools, UKCCIS guidance (sharing nude and semi-nude links) and PHE Rise Above as part of their one stop page for teachers on GOV.UK.

Risk Assess Visiting Speakers to the School:

The School takes care to provide a safe space for pupils to engage with a variety of issues and hear and debate different perspectives and staff follow the protocol set out below to ensure that all visiting speakers are **suitable and appropriately supervised**. This may be during the School day or as part of the extra-curricular programme. The School does not offer its premises to be used for external speaker events outside School hours. The following measures should take place before a visit is agreed:

- staff requesting visits from speakers should first seek authorisation from the Headmistress
- a risk assessment is produced, using the template provided
- the content of the presentation has been agreed and checked
- the content is appropriate for the age of the audience
- any gifts to be issued have been agreed with the Headmistress
- the status and reputation of the speaker has been checked

It will also be mindful when making a decision to host that:

- the decision complies with and does not discriminate against the protected characteristics under the equality duty
- there is no risk to the School's reputation and ethos
- there is no potential for speakers to stir up hatred

The DSL has risk assessed the School's position in respect of its location and the potential of threat and will consider the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral which could include Channel or Local authority children's social care, for example. Birchfield School will ensure that it does not allow its facilities to be used by groups or individuals who seek to promote or express extreme ideological, religious or political views.

The School takes care to ensure the safety of all its pupils by verifying site risk assessments of venues to be visited for educational visits, pre-visit trips by staff where needed and by creating its own risk assessments of visiting staff for workshops and assemblies etc. A template of the risk assessment appears on the Teachers' Area of the network, prompting staff the questions to ask for in respect of checks for suitability. In the event of any concern, the School will contact the local Prevent coordinator.

Use of the School's Premises

The school takes care to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe when renting out the facilities to organisations or individuals e.g extra-curricular activities, sports associations. The school will ensure that that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place and will inspect these as necessary. A route of communication will be established so that contact can be made regularly. A note of the contact details for a safeguarding incident are posted in the staffroom for use. Where a hire or lease agreement is drawn up, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, reference to safeguarding arrangements will be included and failure to comply would lead to termination of the agreement.

WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

Staff should maintain an approach of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and should act on any concerns **immediately**. Staff should make themselves available to listen and demonstrate to the pupil that what they are saying is being taken seriously and without criticism and should respond in a supportive, calm manner and avoid asking detailed questions. They should respond with the appropriate level of confidentiality and not promise that the allegation will not be disclosed to the relevant person. The role of the staff or volunteer is to listen, accurately record and report on CPOMs, not to investigate. Staff and volunteers should take care to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm, that their approach is child-centred and always in the **best interests** of the child.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyber-bullying), gender-based violence, sexual assaults and sexting. If a pupil reports abuse from another pupil or pupils, staff should follow the procedures in this section, in line with SSCP guidance. A bullying incident will be regarded as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Please also refer to the Anti-Bullying Strategy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with local agencies in relation to handling any such cases which arise and SSCP will be contacted for further advice, which may lead to a referral (refer to contact numbers on first page).

The DSL or Deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, neither of them is available, staff should speak to a member of the senior management team and/or take advice from the local authority children's social care. Any resulting action should then be shared with the DSL as soon as possible. Staff should not assume that a colleague will take action and must share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

1. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

If a disclosure is made, the member of staff or volunteer **should**:

- Allow the pace of the conversation to be dictated by the pupil
- Ask open questions which encourage talk e.g "can you tell me what happened?"
- Accept what the pupil says and do not ask for further detail
- Acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you and show by voice tone and/or facial expression that you are taking their concerns seriously
- Note carefully any clearly visible external signs of possible injury or neglect on the CPOMs body map
- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, that it is not their fault, and explain whom you will have to tell (the DSL) and why

The member of staff or volunteer **should not**:

- Burden the pupil by asking questions like "why didn't you tell me before?"
- Interrogate or pressure the pupil to provide information
- **Ask any potentially leading questions** but use examples such as those that start with the words, how, what, when, where and why
- Undress the child or examine clothed parts of the child's body in an attempt to determine the nature of any such injuries/neglect
- Criticise the alleged perpetrator, this may be someone they love
- **Promise confidentiality**
- Make promises that they cannot keep such as "I'll stay with you all the time"
- Put words in the child's mouth (i.e. finish their sentences)
- Speculate about what happened/might have happened, or make accusations
- Show an overly emotional reaction, such as expressing disgust, shock or disbelief
- Attempt to investigate the allegations

2. SUPPORTING THE CHILD

If a pupil confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, staff/volunteers **must not** make promises about confidentiality. Staff must tell the pupil sensitively that they have a responsibility to tell the named DSL so that the child can be helped to stay safe and feel better. If the School has a "child in need" then if there is any concern about that child, local authority children's social care must be contacted immediately. Staff should ensure that the child's wishes, and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Children should be given an opportunity to express their views and give feedback, the school operating with the best interests of the child at heart.

Birchfield School recognises that a child who is abused may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. It is important that they receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating and that staff act upon the early signs of abuse and neglect, keeping clear records and listening to the views of the child, reassessing concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information quickly and challenging inaction. The School will provide continuing support to a pupil who has disclosed abuse through promoting a caring and safe environment within the School and encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum and through relationships. In doing so, the Schools will act in accordance with guidance from the relevant authorities to ensure that, for example, legal proceedings are not compromised.

The DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies if an Early Help Assessment is deemed appropriate. All allegations should be referred by the DSL to the Local Authority Local authority children's social care centre for advice before any investigation takes place. In borderline cases, these discussions can be held informally and without naming the individual. In case of serious harm and on the occasion that a crime has been committed, the police should be informed at the outset.

3. RECORDING INFORMATION

It is important to keep accurate records of all concerns, discussion and decisions made, so that children receive the right help and to prevent issues escalating. This helps if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school. Staff should use the school's recording system, CPOMs, to log records of meetings, conversations and use the body map. If a pupil or parent makes a disclosure, staff/volunteers should:

- Make brief written notes **at the time or immediately afterwards**, which record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, and what has actually been said (wherever possible using the child's exact words, even if they seem childish, rude or inappropriate), not assumption or interpretation
- Complete notes of a disclosure on CPOMs following the guidance as quickly as possible
- Clearly distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion
- Record any observed injuries on the CPOMs Body Map which will send an alert to the DSL
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil (do not translate into "proper terms")
- Appreciate that their records may be used in criminal or court proceedings or GDPR

Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded on CPOMs and the DSL/DDSL will then respond when the alert is read. Each pupil has a separate child protection entry/folder, as needed which includes a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. Please ask the DSL if you have any queries.

4. REPORTING TO THE DSL

Any concerns about pupils must be discussed with Mrs Annette Ackerley or Mrs Pascale Mellor, the DSLs (or in their absence the Deputy DSL, Mrs Amy Jones) as soon as possible and at latest by the end of the School day and recorded on CPOMs. Where the disclosure identifies reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will report the disclosure to the local First Point of Contact Team Social Services Department within 24 hours (0345 6789021). In cases of serious harm, the police should be informed from the outset. Staff are informed that, whilst the DSL generally carries responsibility for making referrals, anyone can make a referral to external agencies.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Staff should be aware that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities face additional safeguarding challenges and are especially vulnerable, both online and offline. These may include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- pupils with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff should be highly vigilant in such cases and discuss any concerns with the DSL. Pupils with EHC Plans should be supervised carefully to ensure that additional support is given with communicating their concerns in the easiest way possible. The Safeguarding Adviser works closely with the DSL to discuss and oversee the provision for pupils with SEND and moderate learning differences who may experience difficulty with online safety in particular. Parents and staff should note that The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS) offers information,

advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND available through the local authority.

REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE WITHIN SCHOOL

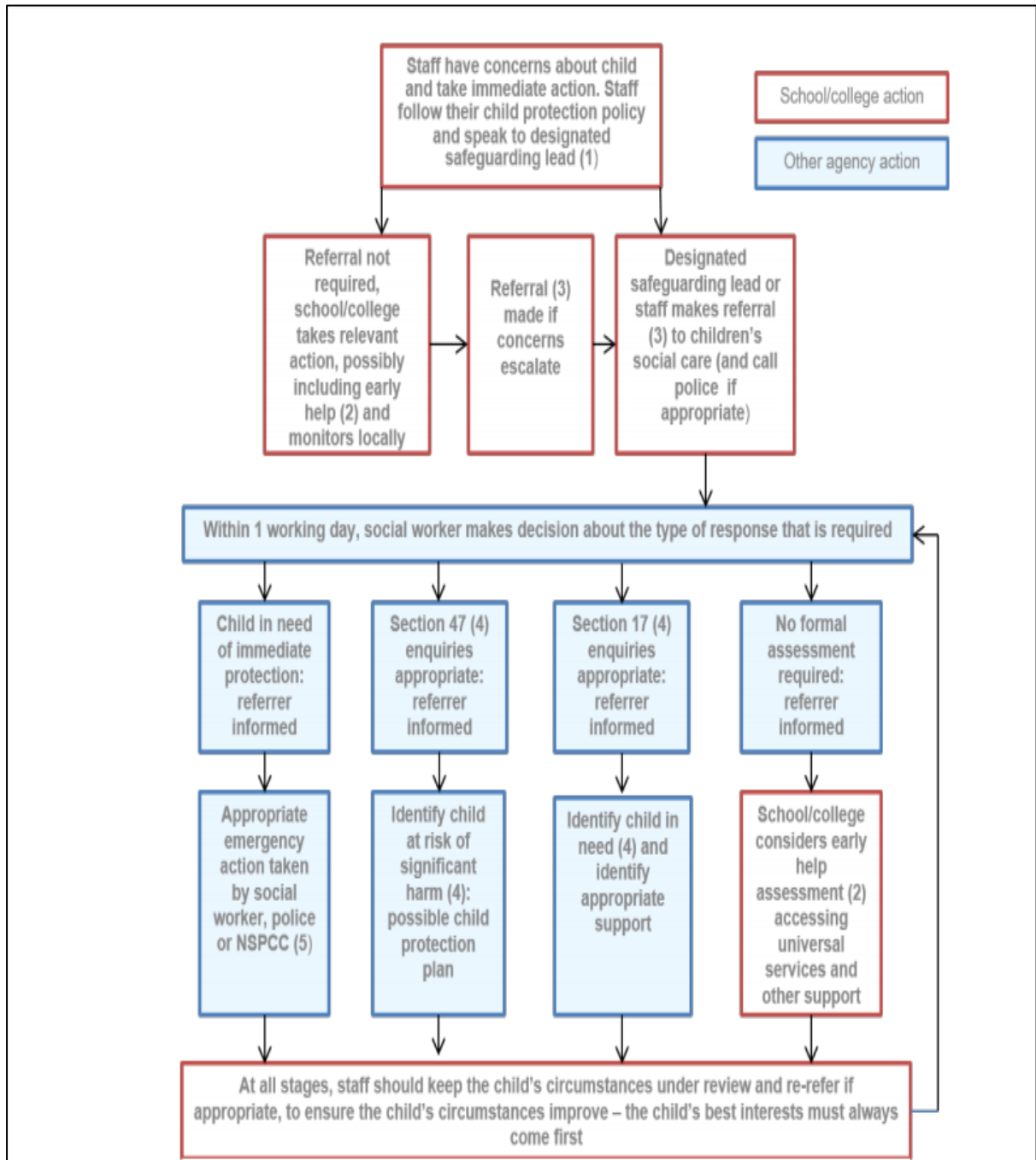
Staff should raise concerns over any unsafe or poor practice or potential failures in the School's safeguarding regime. All such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. If a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern or feels that their concern is not being taken seriously they should refer to the separate Whistleblowing Policy (within the Staff Code of Conduct) in the first instance or contact the NSPCC helpline on help@nspcc.org.uk or on 0800 028 0285 between 8am and 8pm.

REFERRING CONCERNS TO FIRST POINT OF CONTACT (FPOC) DUTY TEAM

The decision to make a referral which could activate a child protection investigation and the issue of gaining parental consent are serious matters and require careful judgement. Advice will be sought in the first instance from SSCP by the DSL and in some cases may involve further consultation with the LADO/Local Authority Local authority children's social care centre and the Legal Department at the Independent Schools Association (ISA). In cases of serious harm, the police will be informed, but this will be instigated further to advice from the Safeguarding Hub. In accordance with this Policy, where the disclosure relates to actual abuse or the suspicion of abuse, the DSL will report the disclosure to the SSCP First Point of Contact Team (FPOC) within 24 hours. In the event of the School making a referral to the Duty and Assessment Team (Social Services) they should agree with the recipient of the referral what exactly the child and parents will be told, when and by whom. The DSL should ask to be kept informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the SSCP First Point of Contact Team and the police which will decide whether and how to investigate. The DSL should be prepared to contribute to the strategy discussion. The SSCP First Point of Contact Team are required to acknowledge written referrals within one working day, although Schools should expect a prompter response in cases which appear to be urgent. If the School has not heard from the SSCP First Point of Contact Team after two working days, the School should contact the team again. A record of each contact, including the name of the officer with whom the School has spoken should be kept.

THE KEY PROCEDURES FLOW CHART

Actions Where There Are Concerns About A Child



PART TWO: THE MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SAFEGUARDING ADVISER

The Proprietor has referred leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and the annual review of safeguarding to the Safeguarding Adviser, a member of the Advisory Committee, who also carries responsibility for safeguarding, to act upon his behalf. He will ensure that the school complies with its duties under legislation and will ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures, including a school child protection policy, a behaviour and staff behaviour policy (to include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing as well as acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and the use of social media) in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. He will ensure that policies and procedures are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents and carers and that systems are in place for children to confidently report any form of abuse or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously and that they can safely express views and give feedback. He will ensure that the policy refers to locally agreed safeguarding arrangements put in place by the three safeguarding partners (the local authority; a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for a police area within the local authority) and that senior leadership teams know how to work with them to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. He will also ensure that procedures are in place to reflect a whole school approach to child-on-child abuse, clear reporting and recording systems and a whole school zero-tolerance approach. The Safeguarding Adviser will also have regard to national and local guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in School are effective and comply with the law at all times and reflect local protocols for assessment. He will work closely with the staff to ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding, allowing child protection and safeguarding to be at the forefront with policies and procedures operating with the best interests of the child at their heart. Where there is a safeguarding concern, he will ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

The Headmistress will ensure that the policies and procedures, particularly those concerning referral of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are understood and followed by all staff.

As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for the Safeguarding Adviser to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the process and principles for sharing information. As the member of the committee with responsibility for safeguarding, he will take part in ongoing training and updates.

Filtering and Monitoring Duties

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the Safeguarding Adviser will do all that he reasonably can to limit pupils' exposure to risk from the school's IT system. As part of this process, he will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and regularly review their effectiveness. He will ensure that all staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Particular focus should be given to those pupils who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system.

Human Rights Act

The HRA sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It compels public organisations to respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make choices about them. Being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature may breach any or all of these rights. Schools must be aware of and not act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention, in particular:

- a) Article 3 – the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- b) Article 8 – the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- c) Article 14 – requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination
- d) Protocol 1, Article 2 – protects the right to education.

Equality Act 2010

The school 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). In the context of safeguarding, and the legal duties placed upon schools in relation to it, the school will carefully consider how it is supporting its pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race. Provision within the Equality Act allows schools to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils or students with a particular protected characteristic in order to meet their specific need. This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people, including those with long term conditions or if, for example, to take positive action to support girls if there was evidence they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The PSED is found within the Equality Act and compliance with it is a legal requirement for state-funded schools. The PSED places a general duty on schools to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, 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. Good record-keeping and monitoring of all forms of abuse and harassment are essential. The school should be aware that some pupils will be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination and are conscious of disproportionate vulnerabilities.

MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that the School contributes to multi-agency working such as social care, the police and health and other services in line with statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)*, and that the school understands its role within the local safeguarding arrangements. He will also ensure that he is aware of the local protocol for assessment and that these are included in the policies and procedures. This includes providing a co-ordinated 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. The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that the School's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership. He is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Headmistress or member of the Safeguarding Adviser.

Information Sharing

The Safeguarding Adviser 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. The school should be aware that it would be legitimate to share information without consent where : it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent and, if to gain consent, would place a child at risk.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING SAFEGUARDING POLICIES/PROCEDURES

The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school's management team, is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. He will report on Child Protection at regular meetings of the Advisory Committee in tandem with the Headmistress (DDSL). There are arrangements in place to ensure that the School's child protection policies and procedures are reviewed annually or earlier if new guidance is received and each policy is read by the Safeguarding Adviser. A separate annual Safeguarding Audit is carried out between the Headmistress, DSL and Safeguarding Adviser also including a review of procedures and the effectiveness of their implementation. They will ensure that there are appropriate policies and procedures including for child protection and staff code of conduct, in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to promote and safeguard children's welfare. They will also ensure that:

- Both policies are provided to all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers and contractors, on induction including Parts One, Part Five and Annex A and B of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) document and guidance sheet and they will take a proportional risk-based approach as to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff and volunteers. Similarly, they will ensure that opportunities exist for staff to contribute to policy development
- The policy reflects a whole school approach to child-on-child abuse which are in turn correctly reported
- Information is shared between professionals and local agencies, as needed, but deemed especially important in the case of child sexual exploitation
- Whilst the Data Protection Act 1998 places a duty to process information fairly and lawfully, this must not be a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm
- That the school follows correct practice on information sharing and adheres to guidance on online safety, serious violence and for pupils with special educational needs
- That an appropriate level of information is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors
- The safeguarding policy describes procedures and local protocols which are in accordance with government guidance and refer to Shropshire's agreed multi-agency procedures as put in place by SSCP. This will allow for an understanding of the 'Right Service at the Right Time' programme and contact details to be available. The local safeguarding board's Section 11 questionnaire will also be completed and shared with the Safeguarding Adviser on an annual basis
- The appropriate filters and monitoring systems exist for safe use of the internet, including the teaching of online safety within the curriculum
- That the DSL, DDSL and staff have updated training in order to carry out and understand their roles in filtering and monitoring
- The safeguarding policy is updated annually as a minimum and kept up to date as issues emerge, including lessons learnt, and is available publicly either via the School website or by other means
- Child protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C of KCSIE
- Appropriate safer recruitment policies are in place, embedded and effective
- Where reasonably practicable, the school holds **more than one** emergency contact number for each pupil or student

The Headmistress in tandem with the DSL will ensure that the policies and procedures agreed with the Safeguarding Adviser, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff. If there was a substantial allegation against a member of staff, the School would work with the LADO/Local Authority local authority children's social care centre to determine whether any improvements could be made to the School's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The School is required to name at least one individual from the leadership team to take lead responsibility for child protection matters and this role is only delegated in the DSL's absence. It has appointed Mrs Annette Ackerley, Head of Prep School and Mrs Pascale Mellor, Head of Senior School, to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is explicit in the role-holder's job description which is attached to this policy. Mrs Amy Jones, Headmistress, will act as Deputy DSL with responsibility for the Early Years. Regular formal refresher training is available for the DSL and Deputy DSL every two years and appropriate whole staff training every two years provided by Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership, last offered in September 2022, with further updates provided by email and staff meetings in the interim, as need demands, in order that they will have the skills and knowledge to manage their role. Further e-safety training is carried out regularly online. Interim updates are provided via Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership termly meetings and conferences as well as Educare online modules, with information relayed at annual and termly staff briefings provided as a minimum. They will liaise with the three safeguarding partners and refer to NPCC to help them understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do. Either the DSL or Deputy DSL will always be available for staff concerns to be discussed, as well as outside hours for before and after-school clubs. The school will ensure that the DSL has appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post and that she will be given additional time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out her role effectively.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to local authority children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral

THE SCHOOL'S RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

In line with the separate Recruitment and Selection Policy, the Safeguarding Adviser will prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised. The School will implement this guidance for anyone working in the school, including supply teachers and volunteers, who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Before employing a person to carry out teaching work in relation to children, the school will undertake an Enhanced DBS certificate, including Barred List check, and take reasonable steps to establish whether that person is subject to a prohibition order made under section 141B of the Education Act 2002 or if any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012. A further check to verify a candidate's identity is carried out where possible by checking the name on the birth certificate. The level of DBS certificate required, and whether a check for any prohibition, direction, sanction, or restriction is required will depend on the role that is being offered and duties involved. The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training. The Deputy DSL, Headmistress, Amy Jones, is trained through the NSPCC online Safer Recruitment course.

The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers and those allegations will be referred to the Local Authority local authority children's social care centre. It will also aim to ensure that staff are sufficiently trained in child protection at the point of recruitment and, in the absence of updated training, provide training upon appointment.

The School's Recruitment and Selection Policy ensures that 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. In such circumstances, the Safeguarding Adviser is committed to promptly report to the DBS any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for the reasons cited and understands that **this is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.**

Reports made to the DBS will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. 'Settlement agreements' cannot apply in this connection or where the individual refuses to co-operate with the investigation. The School has a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information held already but do not have to find it from other sources.

As part of the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (June 2016), new and existing staff who are considered to be in scope are required to confirm in an annual self-declaration form that they do not have disqualification orders in respect of children against them. The check date is then noted on the Single Central Register. It will be the responsibility of each member of staff to advise the Headmistress if their circumstances change in this respect. Where the School receives information that a member of staff falls within the grounds for disqualification, Ofsted will be informed on www.disqualification@ofsted.gov.uk. The School is not able to continue to employ a disqualified member of staff, although it will be explained to them that a waiver can be applied for from Ofsted. If a waiver is not granted, consideration will be given to redeployment or ultimately dismissal (after following a fair process).

Ceasing to use a person's service includes: dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed term contract, no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee, no longer using staff employed by contractors, no longer using volunteers; resignation, and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, Contract Working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. Reports made to the DBS will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. The DBS will decide whether to bar the person. 'Compromise agreements' cannot apply in this connection or where the individual refuses to co-operate with the investigation. If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this should not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this guidance. A referral to the DBS must be made and 'settlement agreements', by which a person resigns if the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, do not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate. At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the designated officer should review the circumstances to see if there is any improvement which can be made to the school's procedures or practice to prevent future recurrence.

Birchfield School understands that it is also under a duty to consider making a referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a Prohibition Order may be appropriate. Referrals should be made as soon as possible and ordinarily upon conclusion of an investigation, when a person is removed from regulated activity. The reason such an Order would be considered are: unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction, at any time, for the relevant offence'. Further guidance on this can be obtained from the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA) website. Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary for a referral to be made to the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA), as information is shared between the two bodies. Where a dismissal does not reach the threshold for DBS referral, then the Safeguarding Adviser will give separate consideration to end the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA) referral.

Supply Teachers

The school may have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by it, for example, supply teachers, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply. The school will ensure that allegations are dealt with properly and will not decide to cease using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable

outcome. The Safeguarding Adviser will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out an investigation. The school will work with agencies and usually take the lead. Any supply teachers in this situation will be advised to contact their trade union representative or colleague for support. The School will inform an agency of its processes for managing allegations.

OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING

The Safeguarding Adviser will consider how children may be taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individuals, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs and disabilities. He will also ensure that relevant topics, with regard to statutory guidance, are included within Relationships Education for Reception to Year 6 and Relationships and Sex Education for Years 7 and above, other areas of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHE) and link to staying safe in use of electronic equipment and with access to the internet (Computing). They will ensure that the appropriate filters and monitoring procedures are in place, but that these are not 'over blocked' which would lead to unreasonable restrictions on what pupils can be taught about safe usage.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education in order to prepare pupils and students for life in modern Britain and create a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that there is a clear set of values in school and that these are underpinned by the behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as a well-planned programme of evidence-based RSE timetabled and reinforced throughout the curriculum. He will ensure that the programme of study is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities and tackles such issues as : healthy and respectful relationships, boundaries and consent, stereotyping, prejudice and equality, body confidence and self-esteem, how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour, laws relating to sexual consent, exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as Forced Marriage and FGM and how to access support as well as what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A STAFF MEMBER

The Safeguarding Adviser should ensure that the school has systems in place to manage **any** safeguarding allegation or concern, no matter how small. He will ensure that the staff know how to report concerns for those that do and do not meet the harms threshold. Staff should refer concerns or allegations to the Headmistress or to the Safeguarding Adviser if the allegation or concern is about the Headmistress. Where staff have a safeguarding concern that **does not** meet the threshold, this should be dealt with in accordance with the Low- Levels Concerns Policy.

Please refer to the Staff Code of Conduct for more information relating to Allegations against Staff including those allegations that may meet the harms threshold as well as those which do not (Low-Level Concerns Policy), also within the Staff Code of Conduct.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

In the event of Birchfield School having a 'Looked After Child', the Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that a designated teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after. The Advisory Committee will ensure, by making provision for training, that the designated teacher has appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding, under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority. The designated teacher will be given the information they need about the child's status, contact arrangements with parents, care arrangements and delegated authority to carers. This information will also be made available to the DSL. The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe. In particular, they will ensure that appropriate staff

have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Care Leavers

Designated safeguarding leads should be aware that local authorities have on-going responsibilities to the young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. They will therefore have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver and should liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

The Safeguarding Adviser will ensure that the child's wishes, or feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children, through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. He will work with the safeguarding team to ensure that staff members do not promise confidentiality to the child and always act in the interests of the child. The School will be particularly alert to children's safeguarding when children stay with host families or in residential accommodation. Every effort will be made to safeguard and protect pupils.

PERIPATETIC MUSIC TEACHERS

Specialist music lessons are provided in School by peripatetic music teachers. These peripatetic music teachers are considered as staff and therefore this policy applies, including arrangements for induction and training. Peripatetic music teachers also have access to the School's key policies and receive induction in the case of new staff.

MISSING OR LOST CHILDREN

A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. The School has a Missing or Lost Child Policy in place which puts appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education settings, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

All School staff must adhere to the guidance provided in the separate Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Disciplinary Procedure. The procedures set out in the School's Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy and Whistleblowing Policy are also followed and should be referred to separately. The policy sets out the School's processes from beginning to end including details of the required checks. Parents can feel confident that careful procedures are in place to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. The School does not at any time use corporal punishment in School.

DISQUALIFICATION FROM CHILDCARE CHECK

Staff are checked through the use of a Self-Declaration Form to verify if they have been disqualified from childcare by an order against them in line with the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and this is renewed annually. The advice applies to all staff who work in Early Years and with those pupils who have not yet attained the age of 8. However, as a small school, other staff also complete the form where there is a possibility that they may work closely with this age group. It also applies to those individuals concerned in the management of such provision. New staff are also asked to complete a Declaration Form to establish whether they have been disqualified from childcare. The grounds for disqualification are not only that a person is barred from working with children but if they:

- Are on the DBS Children's Barred List
- Have been cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home and abroad
- Other orders have been made against them relating to their care of children
- They have had their registration cancelled or refused in relation to childcare or children's homes or have been prohibited from private fostering
- They are living in the same household where another person who is disqualified lives.

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to advise the Headmistress if their circumstances change in this respect. Where the School receives information that a member of staff falls within the grounds for disqualification, Ofsted will be informed on www.disqualification@ofsted.gov.uk. The School is not able to continue to employ a disqualified member of staff, although it will be explained to them that a waiver can be applied for from Ofsted. If a waiver is not granted, consideration will be given to redeployment or ultimately dismissal (after following a fair process).

DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING

FILTERING AND MONITORING PROCEDURE

To be read in tandem with the Safeguarding Policy and Acceptable Use of Technology for Pupils.

Introduction

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) obliges schools to “ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place and regularly review their effectiveness” and “be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children’s exposure to the above risks from the school’s IT system”. Schools are reminded, however, to “be careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.”

This document is designed to set out the measures taken at Birchfield School to keep children as digitally safe as possible by providing appropriate levels of filtering and monitoring, ongoing staff training and clear responsibilities in line with the DfE’s guidance on Filtering and Monitoring Standards (March 2023). Whilst no system can ever be 100% effective, a filtering system, backed up by effective monitoring, is a valuable tool in supporting a digitally safe environment for the whole school community.

Role and Responsibilities

Staff should be aware of the requirement and understand their role within it, as detailed below. They should also be aware of the wider picture relating to filtering and monitoring measures from a safeguarding perspective and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if they are any concerns or queries.

Safeguarding Adviser – has overall responsibility for safeguarding strategy in school. The Chair will meet with the DSL and Headmistress annually to review filtering and monitoring practice and discuss with service providers what more needs to be done to keep pupils as safe as reasonably practicable in school.

Headmistress/Senior Management Team – has/have responsibility for the purchase, resourcing and compliance of filtering systems.

Designated Safeguarding Lead – has lead responsibility for the day-to-day management and understanding of the filtering and safeguarding systems used in school. The DSL will be aware of the sorts of websites pupils are visiting or trying to visit and ensure that the DSL, DDSL and the wider staff are all appropriately trained. Records of alerts should be monitored on a regular basis and stored confidentially, noting the location, user identity, device and notes on any actions taken.

Head of Computing – The Head of Computing will also explain to pupils, in an age-appropriate way, how the filtering systems work when they complete and sign their Code of Conducts.

Head of Computing/Network Manager – will be responsible for explaining to staff how the filtering systems work so that teachers can be aware for day-to-day oversight in lessons. They will confirm that filtering works on all devices, as well as mobile devices such as iPads, or any other devices pupils can access in school. A stock take of all mobile devices will take place. They will carry out a test to ensure that the filtering works in various physical locations on a regular basis and also carry out a deletion of all unnecessary information and photographs on the iPads on a regular basis.

SENCo – the SENCo will liaise closely with the Head of Computing, Network Manager and DSL to identify pupils who may be vulnerable to keeping digitally safe, which is likely to include pupils with neurodiverse profiles such as ASD.

Teaching Staff – Teachers should be aware of how to keep pupils digitally safe so that they can support those pupils most at risk during lessons. Teachers should give advance notice to the Head of Computing/DSL if they are about to teach a lesson which may involve seemingly worrying searches e.g in carrying out research in History lesson on Nazi Germany or a PSHE lesson on drug legalisation. This will allow unblocking in advance, as appropriate. They are encouraged to discuss any matters of concern in respect of digital safeguarding with a member of SMT at any time.

Illegal Online Content

In considering filtering providers or systems, the school ensures that access to illegal content is blocked and that filters for illegal content cannot be disabled.

Inappropriate Online Content

The school aims to be satisfied that its filtering system manages the following content (and web search) although this is not an exhaustive list:

Discrimination – Promotes the unjust or prejudicial treatment of people with protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010

Drugs / Substance abuse – displays or promotes the illegal use of drugs or substances

Extremism – promotes terrorism and terrorist ideologies, violence or intolerance

Gambling – enables gambling

Malware / Hacking – promotes the compromising of systems including anonymous browsing and other filter bypass tools as well as sites hosting malicious content

Pornography – displays sexual acts or explicit images

Piracy and copyright theft – includes illegal provision of copyrighted material

Self-Harm – promotes or displays deliberate self-harm (including suicide and eating disorders)

Violence – displays or promotes the use of physical force intended to hurt or kill

Birchfield School operates a Smoothwall filtering system. Features of this system allow for:

- a) **Links with CPOMs** in contacting the DSL automatically if a particular word or phrase causes a trigger
- b) **Context appropriate differentiated filtering**, based on students and staff as different categories, vulnerability and risk of harm – also includes the ability to vary filtering strength appropriate for staff
- c) **Circumvention** – the extent and ability to identify and manage technologies and techniques used to circumvent the system, for example VPN, proxy services and DNS over HTTPS.
- d) **Control** – has the ability and ease of use that allows schools to control the filter themselves to permit or deny access to specific content
- e) **Contextual Content Filters** – in addition to URL or IP based filtering, the extent to which (http and https) content is analysed as it is streamed to the user and blocked, this would include AI generated content
- f) **Group Management** – the ability for deployment of central policy and central oversight or dashboard
- g) **Identification** – the filtering system should have the ability to identify users
- h) **Mobile and App** content – the filter system blocks inappropriate content via mobile and app technologies
- i) **Network level** – filtering should be applied at ‘network level’ i.e., not reliant on any software on user devices whilst at school
- j) **Reporting mechanism** – the ability to report inappropriate content for access or blocking
- k) **Reports** – the system offers clear historical information on the websites users have accessed or attempted to access
- l) **Safe Search** – the ability to enforce ‘safe search’ when using search engines
- m) **Teachers** have a different level of access to pupils

The school is mindful that it does not over block access, leading to unreasonable restrictions. Given the extent of personal data involved with some filtering systems, the school will also consider the impact upon its Data Protection organisation.

An annual review will take place with the Headmistress, Network Manager, DSL and Safeguarding Adviser to ensure that filtering and monitoring practices are effective and determine if more needs to be done. An open-minded approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be kept as technology evolves and action taken as appropriate.

MOBILE DEVICE AND CAMERA POLICY

For pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and all other pupils

This policy should be read alongside the Staff Code of Conduct; the Acceptable use of Technology by Staff Policy; the Acceptable Use of Technology by Pupils Policy, the Minibus Code of Conduct and the Photography Policy. The school's procedures for filtering and monitoring in line with online safety requirements is set out above.

Introduction and Aim

For the purposes of this policy, the term “mobile device” includes all mobile devices which are capable of receiving, sending or storing data, making telephone calls or taking photographs. Included within the definition are mobile telephones and tablets of all kinds including smartwatches. The aim of this policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines to protect children, including pupils in the **Early Years Foundation Stage**. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile devices are effective communication tools – which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile devices and cameras on School premises or whilst engaged on School business off-site. This includes all staff, volunteers, students on work experience, children, parents, carers, contractors and visitors. This list is not exhaustive. Visitors are made aware of the procedure for correct usage in a Welcome Leaflet issued upon arrival.

Pupils of the School are not allowed to bring mobile devices into School, except in exceptional circumstances when they are handed in to the School office for safekeeping and permission is given by the Headmistress (please refer to the Acceptable Use of Technology – Pupils Policy for more information). Where tablets or laptops are provided for educational use, their use by pupils is always supervised and pupils sign an annual User Agreement which is discussed in Computing lessons in advance.

For pupils travelling on the school minibus, mobile phones are allowed with parental permission for the sole purpose of the journey. They are handed in to their teacher upon arrival at school and pupils and parents are required to sign a Minibus Code of Conduct and User Agreement for Mobile Phones on the School Minibus (please refer to the Minibus Code of Conduct).

It is recognised that mobile devices can be a vehicle for sexually harassing peers and sharing indecent images, both consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) as well as viewing and sharing pornography and other harmful content. The school also considers that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the child's education and safeguard their welfare, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Procedure for Mobile Devices

Staff must keep their mobile devices stored out of sight and reach of pupils at all times, although these may be used freely in:

- (a) staff room during break times and lunchtimes;
- (b) office spaces during breaks or non-contact times (when no children are present);
- (c) child-free classrooms at lunchtimes and before/after School.

Staff leave their belongings in the School at their own risk: it is therefore recommended that they security mark and insure their devices. All mobile devices which hold, or may be used to access, School-related data (e.g. a mobile phone on which a School email account has been set up) must be securely password protected. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, devices must be switched off or put on silent and not used to make or receive calls, or send and receive texts and emails, during work time, except at those times mentioned above.

Staff are not permitted under any circumstances to use their personal mobile devices for taking, recording or sharing images while on the School premises or taking part in any School-related activity outside the School premises. Those staff with school-owned tablets may use them for school use in accordance with the Photography Policy. Early Years staff may use their school-owned tablets to record children at times of learning and play as part of their profile needs, but photographs must not be stored on the tablet but in a safe folder on the school's intranet.

Staff are not permitted to use their own personal mobile devices for contacting pupils of the School or their families, within or outside the school site. A school mobile phone is used for such purpose.

On off-site trips, including residential visits, all accompanying adults are permitted to have their mobile devices, but their use is strictly limited to agreed off-duty times away from the children. The School's mobile must be the first point of contact with the staff member.

Any individual bringing a personal mobile device into the School setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content. As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions in school, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

Advice is also given to staff, pupils and parents regarding the safe wearing of Apple/Smart watches in school – refer to the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.

Emergency Contact

It is recognised that mobile devices provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times. Staff, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances, may have their phones switched on to alert them to any urgent calls. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work.

The Head of Senior and the Head of Senior School should give permission before this course of action is taken (and keep the Headmistress informed), which will be for a limited period and until the matters which gave rise to the exceptional request have been resolved. The School's landline is also available for emergency/urgent contact.

Mobiles for School Use

Designated school mobile devices are an essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site trips. It is an effective communication aid, enabling staff to make and receive calls and send text messages. It also acts as a back-up facility should problems be experienced with the landline telephone, or when contact needs to be made outside work hours. These are stored in the finance office and may be booked through the office. Personal calls, the taking of photographs and texting are not permitted on the school mobile device.

Cameras

The use of personal cameras by staff on the School premises or off-site when engaged in a School-related activity is completely prohibited. Only the School camera/tablet may be used at such times, in accordance with the Photography Policy and especially to take photographs of children. Staff should liaise with the Admissions Manager further in relation to photographs for publicity purposes. The School's Photography Policy must be strictly observed in this regard.

PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

This policy should be read alongside the Staff Code of Conduct; the Acceptable use of Technology by Staff Policy; the Acceptable Use of Technology by Pupils Policy, Minibus Code of Conduct and the Mobile Device and Camera Policy.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines to protect children from potential misuse, such as the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and cyber-bullying.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals, including those who have any dealings with children in the EYFS, who have access to personal or work-related cameras (or devices which contain a camera) on School premises or when engaged on School-related business off-site. This includes all staff, parents, children, carers, volunteers, students on work experience, contractors and visitors. This list is not exhaustive.

Procedure

Staff

The use of personal cameras by staff on School premises or on School-related business when offsite is completely prohibited.

A School camera/tablet is provided for staff use during the course of the School day as part of the learning programme and at whole School events, both on and off-site and arrangements can be made with the Admissions Manager for this purpose. Only the School camera may be used to take photographs of pupils. Under no circumstances should any other camera (or device which contains a camera) be used.

Pupils may not be photographed without written parental permission if the photograph is to be used in any form of marketing or publicity material. It is the responsibility of each member of staff taking photographs to check whether the parents have given such permission in liaison with the school office. Parents are required to give their permission on an annual basis and staff are required to keep a class list of children who may not be photographed. Where a pupil is photographed by the School for official use, the pupils will be advised as to why the photographs are being taken.

Only authorised individuals have access to the School camera/tablets, which are stored securely when not in use. The member of staff using the School camera must sign the log when taking possession of the camera from the School Office and sign the log again upon its safe return. All photographs must be stored on password protected School PCs or laptops as soon as reasonably practicable after the photographs have been taken. No photographs should be stored on the camera itself.

Staff should take great care when taking images of pupils as part of a School activity. The rights of individuals must be respected and child protection ensured at all times. The following matters, in particular, should be carefully considered:

- (a) the purpose of the activity should be clear, as should what will happen to the photographs or videos
- (b) you must be able to justify images in your possession
- (c) all images should be made available in order to determine acceptability
- (d) images should not be made during one-to-one situations
- (e) ensure that the children are appropriately dressed
- (f) only use equipment provided or authorised by the School

- (g) if an image is to be displayed in a place to which the public have access it should not display the full name of any child. Similarly, where a child is named in any School literature, the full name should not be accompanied by a photograph or video
- (h) all images of children should be stored securely and only accessed by those authorised to do so in accordance with the above procedure; and
- (i) images must not be taken secretly

Pupils

Pupils are not permitted to possess personal electronic devices of any kind or take any form of photograph, either when they are on the School premises or engaged in any School-related activity off-site, unless the Headmistress has given her specific permission for them to do so. Where the Headmistress gives her permission, for example where it is appropriate for pupils to take photographs of their peers as part of a learning opportunity, the procedures set out in this policy and the Acceptable Use of Technology by Pupils Policy must be followed at all times. Pupils whose parents have given permission for them to carry a mobile phone on the school minibus are required to sign a User Agreement stating that they must not take or share photographs of others without their advance express permission (refer to Minibus Code of Conduct).

Parents

Parents sign Media Consent Forms upon joining the School, giving consent or otherwise for photographs of their children to be used for publicity purposes. Parents are welcome to take images and videos of their own child at School events, taking place both on and off the School site. However, in line with good safeguarding practice, parents should not take or publish images of other children or pupils online or on social media sites.

INTIMATE CARE PROCEDURE

Birchfield School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children understands their duties and carries them out in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given and that no child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or embarrassment by ensuring care needs are carefully planned and are a positive experience.

This policy applies to all staff undertaking personal care tasks with children but particularly those who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The youngest children who attend Birchfield School are rising 5 years of age having their fifth birthday during their time in our Reception class. As such most children are toilet trained before they start School, which is our expectation, and the staff encourage children to become increasingly independent with their toileting and personal hygiene skills. However, the normal range of development for this group of children indicates that they may not be fully toilet trained and we recognise that occasional toileting 'accidents' may occur. There are also vulnerable groups of children who may require support with personal care on either a short, longer term or permanent basis due to Special Educational Needs and Disability, medical needs or a temporary impairment.

Birchfield School is committed to providing personal care in ways that:

- maintain the dignity of the individual child
- are sensitive to their needs and preferences
- maximise safety and comfort
- protect against intrusion and abuse
- respect the child's right to withdraw their consent
- encourage the child to care for themselves as much as they are able and protect the rights of everyone involved.

The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child is discriminated against.

Toilet Training

Starting School or nursery has always been an important and potentially challenging time for both children and Schools that admit them. It is also a time of growth and very rapid developmental change for all children. As with all developmental milestones in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), there is a wide variation in the time at which children master the skills involved in being fully toilet trained. For a variety of reasons children in the EYFS may:

- be fully toilet trained across all settings
- have been fully toilet trained but regress for a little while in response to the stress and excitement of beginning a new setting
- be fully toilet trained at home but prone to accidents in new settings
- be on the point of being toilet trained but require reminders and encouragement
- not be toilet trained at all but likely to respond quickly to a well-structured toilet training programme
- be fully toilet trained but have a disability or learning difficulties
- have delayed onset of full toilet training in line with other developmental delays but will probably master the skills during the Foundation Stage
- have SEND and might require help (during the Foundation Stage and beyond) with all or some aspects of personal care such as washing, dressing or toileting.

Schools are not expected to toilet train pupils. Therefore, unless the child has a disability, as defined through legislation, it is expected that parents/carers will have trained their child to be clean and dry before their start in the Reception Class.

Parents should be encouraged to train their child at home as part of their daily routine, and Birchfield School staff will reinforce these routines whilst avoiding any unnecessary physical contact.

Safeguarding

Birchfield School at all times follows the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements according to our Safeguarding Policy ensuring that we provide a high-quality environment which is welcoming, safe and stimulating and where children are able to grow in confidence. Staff are aware of these guidelines and follow good practice for their own protection as well as for the protection of the children.

Staff will follow guidance according to this Policy when completing any tasks involving intimate care and are provided with the facilities and resources necessary.

Procedures

- Staff should be mindful of and respect the personal dignity of the pupils when supervising, teaching or reinforcing toileting skills
- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet
- All children whilst in our care are taken to the toilet on a very regular basis and are encouraged to recognise their own toileting needs by asking to go. Staff are always vigilant to check for 'accidents'
- Staff and children shall wash their hands with antibacterial soap and warm running water after assisting with toileting
- Children with soiled or wet clothing shall be changed allowing for certain privacy to avoid embarrassment. Mobile children will be changed standing up and if possible in a toilet cubicle or at least in privacy. (Children in year one and above should only be changed in a toilet cubicle whilst standing up.) Staff will wear fresh protective clothing i.e. gloves, and an apron if necessary
- Each child is required to have their own spare clothes on their peg to change into for physical and emotional comfort
- Staff will be caring and helpful when changing wet or soiled clothes. Changing time can be a positive learning time and an opportunity to promote independence and self-worth. Staff will never make negative or inappropriate comments
- Caretaking/cleaning staff will be informed - the area where a child is changed will be cleaned and sanitised
- Wet or soiled clothing will be bagged (soiled clothing will require double bagging), sealed securely and sent home to be washed. Gloves and aprons will be disposed of appropriately and hands thoroughly washed immediately after changing is completed using hot water and antibacterial soap. Paper towels will be available to dry hands
- If a child has had their clothes changed due to wetting or soiling them this must be logged and the parents notified when collecting their child

The same procedures and precautions will apply for the occasional changing of 'pull ups' which will also include that:

- soiled 'pull ups' will be securely wrapped and disposed of appropriately. The disposal of waste for one child in this instance would be considered to be municipal waste and therefore may be disposed of in the usual bins using appropriate nappy sacks
- staff will record when a 'pull up' has been changed and parents will be notified when collecting their child. Parents are required to provide all materials

Partnership with parents is an important principle of Birchfield School and is particularly necessary when addressing toileting issues. Issues around toileting should be discussed prior to admission into School. Much of the information required by School to make the process of intimate care as comfortable as possible is available from the parents. Regular consultation and information sharing remain essential features of our partnership.

We will communicate with the family to establish whether there are medical needs involved. If there are medical needs, we will endeavour to work with the family to support the child.

'Intimate Care' boxes are located in the ground floor toilets in the Pre-Prep area and the Reception class.

The boxes contain:

- Aprons
- Gloves of varying sizes
- Intimate care wipes
- Disposal bags
- Antibacterial wipes
- Hygienic hand rub

If a member of staff happens to use the last of any of the above items or notes that the items are running out, please notify the Named First Aider immediately to enable replenishment.

SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE FOR REMOTE LEARNING

The School's procedure for the safe and appropriate use of remote learning and management of child safeguarding during any period of remote learning is set out below. **This procedure would be implemented in exceptional circumstances such as during a pandemic such as COVID-19 or other circumstance authorised by the Headmistress.** Reference should also be made via the school's website to the following policies in respect of Remote Learning guidance and expectations:

Acceptable Use of Technology for Pupils – a Home User Agreement for Remote Learning is in operation for pupils to discuss and share with parents, sign and return to the school and governs safe and appropriate online use.

Behaviour Policy – Appendix I of the Policy lays out expectations of pupils' behaviour under a Virtual Classroom Code of Conduct during live streamed video lessons with guidance set out also for parents in support of their child or children during distance learning periods.

In addition, the following guidance should be adhered to and implemented in relation to ongoing child safeguarding rigour at the school. It is acknowledged that during a period of remote learning that there is potential for safeguarding issues to arise, whether due to inadequate technical understanding, an intention to abuse or other reason.

Safeguarding Team

The safeguarding team of Mrs Annette Ackerley and Pascale Mellor as Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), Mrs Amy Jones as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and with responsibility for the Early Years and Sir Michael Griffiths as Chair of the Advisory Committee responsible for safeguarding remains the same during a period of remote learning. Consultation with the Head of Computing may also take place, as needed.

Responsibility for remote teaching lies with the Head of Prep and Head of Senior School and Headmistress, who are also DSL and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and they will work in conjunction with the Head of Computing, as appropriate. Their aims will be to :

- Ensure safe use of online programs by pupils and offer guidance to parents
- Oversee the process and adapt it if needed to ensure pupils are fully supported if they have concerns
- Offer support information to pupils via Computing lessons
- Collate information passed to them by Form Tutors who keep in contact with pupils regularly

Reporting a Concern about a Pupil

The DSL or the Deputy DSL will always be contactable via phone or online video or will be on the school site. The DSL should be contacted initially on their school email address, which will be monitored constantly, and copy in the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead also. An individual, video or conference telephone call will subsequently be set up as a matter of urgency to discuss the matter further. Details of the disclosure should be emailed at the time. In line with the Safeguarding Policy, for a child at immediate risk of harm, this should be reported directly to Local authority children's social care or, if appropriate, the Police. The DSL will keep in contact with SSCP in case local arrangements change during a period of lockdown.

Whistleblowing – Reporting a Concern about a Member of Staff

Staff with concerns about a member of staff should follow the Whistleblowing Policy in a similar way, contacting the Headmistress by email initially and forwarding notes of the concern. The email address will be constantly monitored, and a telephone call will subsequently be set up to discuss the matter further.

Supporting Pupils

Form Tutors and Academic Tutors will be responsible for keeping in touch with pupils on a regular basis and report any concerns to the DSL. Pupils will be informed how to use the online systems and to know the school's Code of Conduct in the Virtual Classroom through an initial Computing lesson. They will also discuss the Home User Agreement for Remote Learning at home and with their teacher in Computing and a copy of both documents will be posted within the Google Classroom for easy access. Pupils can be reassured that the person contacting them is who they say they are as the pupil/class will be invited to join a meeting via Google Classroom.

Pupils may contact teachers via the Google Classroom Stream either as a group comment during a lesson or as a private comment directly to the teacher. These should always be appropriate and in line with the Home User Agreement for Remote Learning and any breach of this through Google Classroom, Zoom or other platform will be followed up. Pupils' views will always be listened to and this may be as part of a Form Tutor or Academic Tutor weekly check in call, as a Head of House welcome or during Well-Being Wednesday and discussion of the Pupil Tracker to trace how pupils are managing with the online provision, their successes and anything they may have concerns about.

Teachers must ensure that pupils' microphones are switched off upon entry to a live session and they are also responsible for decisions on the use of cameras during the session.

Any teacher with even the slightest concern as to a child's well-being should not hesitate to refer this in line with this procedure to ensure that child safeguarding is maintained at all times. For families with poor Wi-Fi access, packs of hard copies will be provided for delivery/collection to be collated by the Form Tutor.

The SENCo will be responsible for organising any separate methods of provision, where needed, for vulnerable pupils or pupils with EHCPs and will agree arrangements for this in tandem with the Headmistress. These will take into account the pupils' individual needs and design a suitable way of working in tandem with the parents.

One to One Tuition Online: there may be rare occasions when a teacher needs to provide a one to one tuition session online to model a concept that a pupil is struggling with or for another important reason. If such is the case, the pupil must have a parent or responsible adult present at the time and evidence of this made available to the teacher. One to one tuition online is not encouraged and only used in exceptional circumstances, with reasons shared beforehand with the Head of Senior and/or Head of Senior School.

Cyberbullying

Teachers should be sure to follow the Safeguarding Policy guidance on cyberbullying and be vigilant of the potential for this occurring during live streamed sessions or as part of the Google Classroom Stream. Any inappropriate comments or other inappropriate action should be followed up in line with the Policy and reported to the DSL accordingly. Teachers should also ensure that pupils are fully aware of and understand the Virtual Classroom Code of Conduct and have discussed the Home User Agreement for Remote Learning with their teacher and at home to ensure safe and appropriate online use. Should there be instances of cyberbullying taking place, a pupil's access to the resource may be temporarily barred or other sanction in line with the policies. Staff must be aware that any online bullying is potentially a safeguarding issue and report it immediately.

Supporting Staff

Staff have received initial remote learning training, and this will continue in the weeks ahead, led by the Head of Computing. An initial letter of explaining the need to be vigilant in respect of child safeguarding and what to look for has been issued to staff. A further recorded video session for staff will demonstrate some of the areas to watch out for in respect of remote learning. Staff with any concerns should speak to the DSL or Head of Computing, as appropriate.

Use of Resources

Staff should only use recognised resource materials for use on Google Classroom, Zoom and Tapestry and must check that these are always appropriate and age appropriate. If a video excerpt is used, staff must have watched the whole of the video before uploading it to a folder for pupils to watch. They should ensure that they use approved devices rather than personal ones, where possible.

Monitoring of Remote Learning

Pupils are encouraged via the Code of Conduct for the Virtual Classroom to report any concerns which occur as part of a recorded or live session. Teachers are also encouraged to do the same and to report this to the Head of Computing, DSL or Headmistress depending on the nature of their concern. The Headmistress may also join live lessons as part of an ongoing monitoring provision and feedback to staff, as and if appropriate.

Partnership with Parents

The School shares a purpose with parents to keep pupils safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. It is committed to working with parents/guardians positively, openly and honestly and ensures that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child as required by law. The School will share with parents any concerns it may have about their child unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns with the Headmistress or in their absence, the Head of Senior or Head of Senior School, the Head of Pre-Prep or Named First Aider. We make parents aware of our policy through the School's website and New Parents' Handbook. The School will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will investigate any concerns in accordance with the policy.

OUT OF TERM TIME PROCEDURE – CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

In the event of a child protection issue developing outside term time, when a holiday club or activity is in operation, the staff will continue to follow the procedure in this policy and contact the DSL, or the Deputy DSL if she is unavailable, on the private contact numbers list circulated within School. Staff running activities outside term times should ensure that they have up to dates contact details to hand from the School office and are provided with a handout on what steps to take in the event of an incident. However, in the event of an issue of concern arising and neither the designated DSL nor the Deputy DSL being available, staff should contact the SSCP First Point of Contact Team (FPOC) on 0345 678 9021 to find appropriate local authority advice. The relevant contact numbers are displayed in the staffroom and School Office. The DSL/Deputy DSL should then be made aware of any information relating to an incident as soon as possible and copies of paperwork or entries on CPOMs completed and handed over as soon as possible.

However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the school ensures that it has its own child protection policy, awareness of safeguarding procedures and staff training in line with guidance in line with Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings (September 2023) These are explained as a requirement of the hire agreement. In the event that the school receives an allegation that an incident has occurred when an individual or organisation was using its school premises, the school will follow its own safeguarding procedures including informing the LADO.

Disclosure of Safeguarding Incident Form for Staff



Birchfield School

To be used if unable to access the school's CPOMs recording systems – please speak to DSL for detail

Pupil's Name:			
Pupil's Date of Birth:		Year Group:	

Date/Time of Incident:		Person Reporting:	
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Nature of Incident: Explain what you have seen or heard, using the pupil's own words as appropriate and referring to any injuries if relevant (please mark any injuries on the body map and use the guidance attached).

Explain why you are concerned about this pupil? Is this the first time you have been concerned about them? Please give details.

Are the parents aware of your concerns/were present at the time? Please explain fully.

Have you spoken to the pupil or anyone else at the time or since and what was said? Record in full detail.

What action have you taken?

Date/Time Report handed to DSL:	
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Signed:	Name:
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DSL Signed:	Name:
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The Designated Safeguarding Lead will now follow up on your behalf. Please complete the Body Map form as attached if appropriate

BODY MAP FORM AND GUIDANCE



Please only use this form if you are unable to access the CPOMs system's own body map

A Body Map Form should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries in support of a disclosure form being submitted to the DSL. Always use a black pen (never a pencil) and do not use correction fluid or any other eraser. This sheet should be stapled to the correct form and submitted to the DSL with injuries clearly marked on it. Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

***At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or School take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, the body map below should be used.**

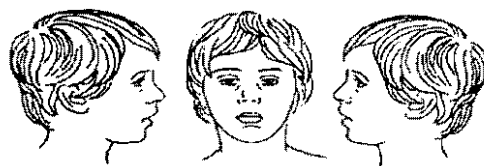
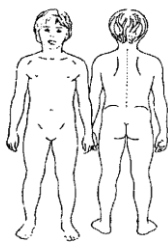
Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the DSL or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL or the appropriate safeguarding services.

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:

- Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
- Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?
- Does the child feel pain?
- Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

Importantly, the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required. A copy of the body map should be kept on the child's concern/confidential file.

**Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record
Child's Name : _____**



ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has **the lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection as the person most likely to have the full picture of a situation as well as the status and authority within the School to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff. They will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings - and to support other staff to do so - and to contribute to the assessment of children. The ultimate lead responsibility remains with the DSL even though some responsibilities may be delegated to the deputy.

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding lead are:

MANAGING REFERRALS

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to:
 - The local authority local authority children's social care for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member)
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child)
 - Police (cases where a crime may have been committed)
 - the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required
- Liaise with the Safeguarding Adviser to inform him or her of issues especially on-going enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- support staff who make referrals to local authority local authority children's social care or to the Channel programme
- Act as a point of contact for other agencies as well as a focal point of reporting procedures for staff

WORK WITH OTHERS

They will:

- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- liaise with the Headmistress to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- As required, liaise with the 'case manager' and the designated officers at the local authority for child protection concerns
- Liaise with staff (especially school nurses, pastoral staff, IT technicians, SENCOs and Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Meet regularly with the Safeguarding Adviser
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff
- Follow correct procedure in information sharing and the transfer of relevant information to pupils' new schools, in advance of them joining, if necessary
- Ensure that the DSL and DDSL have updated online safety training, including that relating to a sound understanding of the filtering and monitoring and processes in place, and that staff are regularly trained also. The DSL will also liaise with the Head of Computing to ensure that planning for the curriculum takes into account online safety
- Ensure that child protection files are transferred to a new school as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. They will also ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt. The DSL will liaise with the SENCO, as required

TRAINING

The designated safeguarding lead should receive appropriate training to include Prevent training, carried out every two years in order to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. In addition, they will refresh their knowledge and skills via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs and attending local authority conferences and meetings at regular intervals, but at least annually. They will also:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Have updated online safety training in order to ensure an understanding of their role in filtering and monitoring and arrange suitable training for staff
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the School or college may put in place to protect them
- understand and support the School with regards to the requirements of the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation

RAISING AWARENESS

The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the School or college's policies are known and used appropriately:

- Ensure the School Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- Ensure the policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the School or college in this
- Where children leave the School or college, ensure their child protection file is copied for any new School or college as soon as possible, but transferred separately from the main pupil file

CHILD PROTECTION FILES

Where children leave the School the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is transferred to the new School as soon as possible separately to the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. The DSL will ensure that all concerns, discussions and decisions and the reasons for those decisions are recorded in writing. Records are kept securely and confidentially and reviewed regularly to establish any patterns of behaviour. The DSL (or Deputy DSL) will always be available during term time and tuition sessions outside standard School hours to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

ROLE OF THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has **deputised responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection as the second person most likely to have the full picture of a situation as well as the status and authority within the School to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff. They will be required to act as DSL if the DSL is absent from school and then to inform the staff that they are assuming that role for that period of time. In these instances, they will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings - and to support other staff to do so - and to contribute to the assessment of children. The ultimate lead responsibility remains with the DSL even though some responsibilities may be delegated to the deputy. The DDSL will assume the DSL job description when required to be in full role and also acts as the person with responsibility for the Early Years. At other times, they will use the job description listed below. The two will work together and receive the same level of training.

The broad areas of responsibility for the deputy designated safeguarding lead are:

SUPPORTING REFERRALS

- Work in communication with the DSL as needed to refer cases to the local authority
- Be kept in the loop of all ongoing cases, as needed to support the role in school
- Attend meetings with the Safeguarding Adviser, if needed, to discuss child protection issues.
- To act as the link person in the area of Early Years
- support staff with general information but always refer to the DSL and keep them informed

WORK WITH OTHERS

They will :

- liaise with the DSL to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- ensure that staff complete Educare modules and provide certificates in support of the DSL
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff
- Follow correct procedure in information sharing and the transfer of relevant information to pupils' new schools, in advance of them joining, if necessary.

TRAINING

The deputy designated safeguarding lead should receive appropriate training to include Prevent training, carried out every two years in order to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. In addition, they will refresh their knowledge and skills via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs and attending local authority conferences and meetings at regular intervals, but at least annually. They will also:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Have updated online safety training in order to ensure an understanding of their role in filtering and monitoring and arrange suitable training for staff
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so other DSLs and attending local authority conferences and meetings at regular intervals, but at least annually. They will also :

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the School or college may put in place to protect them
- understand and support the School with regards to the requirements of the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation

RAISING AWARENESS

The deputy designated safeguarding lead should ensure the School or college's policies are known and used appropriately and inform the DSL immediately if they have any concerns in this respect :

- be part of the annual review of the Safeguarding Policy if needed and monitor the procedures and implementations are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- Where children leave the School or college, liaise with the DSL in ensuring that their child protection file is copied for any new School or college as soon as possible, but transferred separately from the main pupil file

CHILD PROTECTION FILES

Where children leave the School the deputy DSL will be kept informed of how to access child protection records and those cases referred on to future schools for pupils who have left. They may be involved in preparing paperwork to assist the DSL in this respect. The deputy DSL will ensure that all concerns, discussions and decisions and the reasons for those decisions are recorded in writing when acting in the full role of DSL. The Deputy DSL) will always be available during term time and tuition sessions outside standard School hours to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the School or college may put in place to protect them
- understand and support the School with regards to the requirements of the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation.

ROLE OF THE MEMBER OF THE SAFEGUARDING ADVISER

- I. The main role of the **Safeguarding Adviser** is to take leadership responsibility on behalf of the Committee for the School's safeguarding arrangements, which he will do by discharging the following functions:
 - (i) champion the promotion of well-being, safeguarding and child protection issues at the highest level within the School
 - (ii) encourage other members of the Advisory Committee to develop their understanding of the committee's responsibilities with regard to well-being, safeguarding and child protection and support them in the performance of these duties
 - (iii) ensure that the a suitable Safeguarding Policy is put in place as well as associated procedures which have proper regard to prevailing regulations, guidance, standards and advice
 - (iv) be familiar with the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) guidance and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection and associated issues, including local protocols for assessment, contributing to multi-agency working
 - (v) ensure that any deficiencies in the School's safeguarding practices which are brought to the Committee's attention from any source are investigated and addressed
 - (vi) meet regularly with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in order to monitor the effectiveness of the School's Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures and the implementation of these across the School. It is recommended that this is at least a termly meeting
 - (vii) ensure that a full review of the School's Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures is undertaken at least annually (or earlier if needed in response to changes to the law, policy or statutory guidance or as appropriate in response to specific incidents) in accordance with all statutory guidance (and guidelines adopted by the Board)
 - (viii) ensure that the Committee is made aware of any proven incident or allegation (anonymised where appropriate) which has implications for the School's Safeguarding Policy or associated procedures
 - (ix) ensure that the DSL is part of the School's senior leadership team, and has sufficient time and resources at his/her disposal to carry out his/her duties effectively
 - (x) ensure that the DSL (and Deputy DSL, if appointed) receive appropriate training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role at least every two years, and that their knowledge and skills are appropriately refreshed at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role
 - (xi) ensure that arrangements are in place for the inclusion of child protection training on the School's policies and procedures in an induction programme for all people working in the School, no matter for how long, nor the status of that individual
 - (xii) ensure that the School makes opportunities available to staff to feed into and shape the School's approach to safeguarding and safeguarding policies

- (xiii) ensure that safer recruitment procedures are in place and implemented with appropriate checks undertaken on all new staff and volunteers
 - (xiv) be aware of how safeguarding and child protection issues, including guidance on adjusting behaviours to reduce risks, the safer use of electronic devices, social media and the internet and advice on who to turn to for help, are properly addressed through the curriculum and schemes of work
 - (xv) ensure that appropriate IT filters and monitoring systems are in place to prevent children from accessing harmful or inappropriate material, including the need for staff to receive ongoing training and to understand their roles and responsibilities;
 - (xvi) ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe, with identified staff tasked to promote the educational achievement of looked after children
 - (xvii) ensure that factors particular to the School which have a bearing on the profile of well-being and safeguarding issues are properly risk assessed, such issues including (without limitation): historical concerns, looked after children, mental health, body image, self-harm, children missing education, radicalization, pupils performing a caring role at home, children with special educational needs or learning difficulties, those for whom English is an additional language, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and cyberbullying
 - (xviii) both provide to, and seek from, the local authority and other relevant agencies information about how the Committee's duties in respect of safeguarding and child protection have been discharged, where appropriate or requested
2. The identity of and contact details for the **Safeguarding Adviser**, together with an outline of his duties, will be publicised widely within the School community to ensure that pupils, parents, staff and the Committee understand the purpose and importance of the role.
 3. To the extent that the role and duties of the **Safeguarding Adviser** conflict with those assumed by others within the School, the Committee will take all necessary action to resolve those conflicts so as to achieve clarity about respective roles and duties. This may include amendments to the Safeguarding Policy, the School's constitutional documents and/or other arrangements applicable to the School.
 4. The **Safeguarding Adviser** will undertake appropriate training in accordance with the SSCP's recommendations to fulfil their respective roles and duties.

IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Mrs Annette Ackerley
Birchfield School
Albrighton
Near Wolverhampton
WV7 3AF
Telephone: 01902 372 534

Mrs Pascale Mellor
Birchfield School
Albrighton
Near Wolverhampton
WV7 3AF
Telephone: 01902 372 534

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Amy Jones
Birchfield School
Albrighton
Near Wolverhampton
WV7 3AF
Telephone: 01902 372 534

Safeguarding Adviser

Sir Michael Griffiths
c/o Birchfield School
Albrighton
Near Wolverhampton
WV7 3AF
Telephone: 01902 372 534

Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership - First Point of Contact Team (FPOC)

Tel: 0345 678 9021
Out of Hours Tel: 0345 678 9040

Designated Office in the Local Authority (LADO): 0345 678 9021 (Michelle Taylor)
LADO & Risk Manager
Independent Review Unit, Mt. McKinley Building, Anchorage Avenue,
Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury SY2 6FG.
Tel: (01743)256247
Email: michelle.taylor@shropshire.gov.uk
Secure Email: michelle.taylor@shropshire.gcsx.gov.uk
Web: www.shropshire.gov.uk

Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP)
Shropshire Council Room GN94 Ground Floor, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Tel 01743 254259 Jane Parsons or for Emma Harding 01743 257929
<http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/>
Emma.Harding-Safeguarding@shropshire.gov.uk

Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership– Kerry Woodhouse, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford TF3 4NT
Family Connect: 01952 385385 and out of hours: 01952 676500
<https://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk/site/index.php>

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Board
Safeguarding Children’s Board Admin Team, Wedgwood Building, Tipping Street, Staffordshire ST16 2DH
Staffordshire First Response Service: 0800 1313 126
Emergency Duty Service: (Out of Hours)
Telephone: 0345 604 2886 Mobile: 07815 492613
Stoke-on-Trent
Call Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Referral Team:
Phone 01782 235100 and Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours) – Tel: 01782 234234
Out of Hours Tel: 01785 277151
www.staffsscb.org.uk

Wolverhampton Safeguarding Service – Civic Centre, Albert Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1FH
Chair of Wolverhampton Children’s Board: Emma Bennett
Telephone: 01902 550477, emergency service on - 01902 552999
E-mail - wscb@wolverhampton.gov.uk. Website - wsb@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Public Protection Unit (West Mercia Police)
0300 333 3000
Telephone No: 999 in emergencies
Non-Emergency Telephone Number: 101
www.shropshire.gov.uk click ‘report it’ button

NSPCC Advice for Concern about a Child
help@nspcc.org.uk
tel:0808 800 5000

ChildLine Tel No: 0800 1111

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Helpline
help@nspcc.org.uk
tel: 0800 028 0285

Prevent : (for reporting on radicalisation)
West Mercia Prevent Team
Detective Sergeant Stuart Clark, Tel No : 01386 591835
PC Manjit Sidhu, Tel No : 01386 591815
Email : prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk

DfE

Non-emergency advice for staff: 020 7340 7264

Police

Public Protection Unit (West Mercia Police) Tel No: 0300 333 3000

Telephone No: 999 in emergencies

Non-Emergency Telephone Number: 101

www.shropshire.gov.uk click 'report it' button