THE COURTYARD

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Courtyard offers a tailored educational and social provision with a holistic approach. We aim to equip our students with the skills and experiences needed to discover and thrive with increased independence in their next stage of life.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION - POLICY STATEMENT

Approval Committee:	**Full Governing Body**
Author:	**Head Teacher**
Last reviewed:	**October 2026**
Next review date:	**October 2027**
Required to publish on website?	**Yes**
Statutory?	**Yes**

POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 At the Courtyard we recognise that students' high self-esteem and confidence, together with supportive friends and clear lines of communication with trusted adults, will provide the basis for a secure Child Protection Policy. Please note that all students including those 18+, are supported with this policy. Students aged 18 and over will be signposted to adult services in the local authority should they be required.

1.2 The Courtyard will establish systems and structures which prevent harm to, protect and support students throughout their time with us.

1.3 This will be achieved by:

1.3.1 basing our behaviour within the context of the Courtyard's ethos statement;
1.3.2 establishing clear and caring pastoral systems;
1.3.3 addressing central issues in our Key Worker & assemblies programme;
1.3.4 training staff to know how to deal with such concerns; and
1.3.5 establishing clear links with the support services.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

1.4.1 Health and Safety.
1.4.2 Behaviour.
1.4.3 Anti-bullying.
1.4.4 SEND.
1.4.5 RSHE.
1.4.6 Intimate Care.
1.4.7 Local Protocol for assessment of needs for individual students/YP (refer to all local authorities that have placed students at the Courtyard).

1.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Louise Norman, Deputy Head: SEN/Safeguarding, Level 5 Child Protection Training.

1.6 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Deborah Shepherd, Fajri Aitken, Eve Pennington, Alison Rush, Level 3 Child Protection Training.

1.7 The Safeguarding Governor is Jo Honigmann.

1.8 The policy should be shared with all stakeholders, including governors, staff, volunteers, nurses and supply staff.

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Louise Norman	Louise.norman@thecourtyardislington.org
Deputy DSL	Deborah Shepherd	Deborah.shepherd@thecourtyardislington.org
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Islington	lado@islington.gov.uk 020 7527 8101
Chair of Governors	Tom Livesey	Tom.Livesey@thecourtyardislington.org
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote students/YP's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)(2026), and the Governance Handbook. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy will be reviewed annually and whenever there is significant change to statutory guidance, legislation or local safeguarding arrangements. Working Together 2026 specifically strengthens expectations around multi-agency working, Family Help, information sharing, anti-discriminatory practice, child sexual abuse, domestic abuse and multiple/overlapping harms

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school
- The Childrens Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children and Young People
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to Children and Young People
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, updated September 2023, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their students with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting students (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled students. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) set out in the Equality Act 2010, which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve student outcomes. Some students may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, including the lawful and proportionate processing and sharing information for safeguarding purposes
-
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, where applicable to safeguarding information-sharing arrangements.
-
- Childrens Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, as applicable to the school's safeguarding and child welfare duties.
- Revised Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance, September 2026

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of student/YP students/YP means:

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

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children and young people suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child or young person, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or young person's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

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

Child includes everyone under the age of 18. This policy also applies to students over the age of 18.

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

- The local authority (LA)
- An Integrated Care Board for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

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

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

4. Equality statement

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

We give additional special consideration to children/YP who:

- Have disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated
- The student is an 'adult in education'. In this instance it is important to reflect on the six principles of safeguarding to ensure the young person is receiving the appropriate support: Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership, and Accountability.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and Child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

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

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such 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)
    - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support
    - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

5.1 All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask students/YP to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for students who are LGBT to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this student/YP protection and safeguarding policy, the staff Handbook, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children/YP who go missing from education
- Family Help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority student/YP's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a student/YP tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that students/YP can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that students/YP who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other students/YP
- What to look for to identify students/YP who need help or protection

Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Louise Norman, Deputy Head: SEN/Safeguarding. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Outside of school hours, the DSL can be contacted via email –louise.norman@thecourtyardislington.org

The DSL and deputies will maintain an up-to-date understanding of local safeguarding arrangements, Family Help pathways, child protection procedures and specialist services available to children and families

The DSL will ensure that safeguarding assessments consider the possibility of multiple or overlapping harms and the child's experiences both inside and outside the home and school environment, including online.

The DSL will ensure that safeguarding responses appropriately consider the child's wishes and feelings while maintaining the child's safety as the primary consideration.

When the DSL is absent, the deputies (Deborah Shepherd, Headteacher; Alison Rush, Assistant Head; Fajri Aitken, Assistant Head; Eve Pennington, Pastoral Assistant will act as cover. There will always be appropriate safeguarding leadership and cover arrangements when the DSL is absent, including arrangements for confidential receipt and escalation of safeguarding concerns.

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

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

The DSL will also:

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

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

5.3 The governing board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Make sure:
    - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
    - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
    - The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns
    - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure

    - That this policy reflects that students/YP with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the student/YP who attend these services/activities are student/YP on the school roll):
    - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
    - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
    - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

All governors will ensure they are familiar with the requirements of KCSIE 2026. All staff, including staff who do not work directly with children, will be required to read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full where applicable to their role.

Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
    - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
    - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their student/YP joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and Child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this

6. Confidentiality

All staff will understand that Child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of concern for the student and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL or Chair of Governors. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it. .Child protection and safeguarding information will be stored, processed and shared securely, lawfully and proportionately in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and other legislation and statutory guidance.

Note the following:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of students/YP.

- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: 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 student/YP at risk
- Staff should never promise a student/YP that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the student's/YP's best interests
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
    - There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
    - The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other students/YP
    - The DSL should consider that:
        - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
        - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a student/YP is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority social care
        - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, including assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
    - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
    - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any student/YP involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for student/YP involved
    - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

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

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

7.1 If a student/YP is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a student/YP is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

The DSL will make a referral to social care if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the student/YP.

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

7.2 If a student/YP makes a disclosure to you

If a student/YP discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the student/YP they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the student/YP's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process

Bear in mind that some students/YP may:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a student/YP.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a student is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a student has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a student may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve social care as appropriate.

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

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a student is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine students.

Any member of staff who suspects a student is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out or discovers that a student **aged 18 or over** appears to have been a victim of FGM] should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

Referrals are made to Islington Children's Services - 020 7527 7400

7.4 If you have concerns about a student/YP (as opposed to believing a student/YP is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a student/YP's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from the appropriate local authority social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to the appropriate local authority social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Family Help assessment

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

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

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

Islington Bright Futures are the local organization that supports families with family help assessments – 0207 527 4343.

Referral

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

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

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

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

Islington Children's Services Contact Team – 0207 527 7400

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

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

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority YP's social care. Make a referral to local authority social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

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

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

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

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

7.6 If you have a mental health concern

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a student/YP has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a student/YP may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

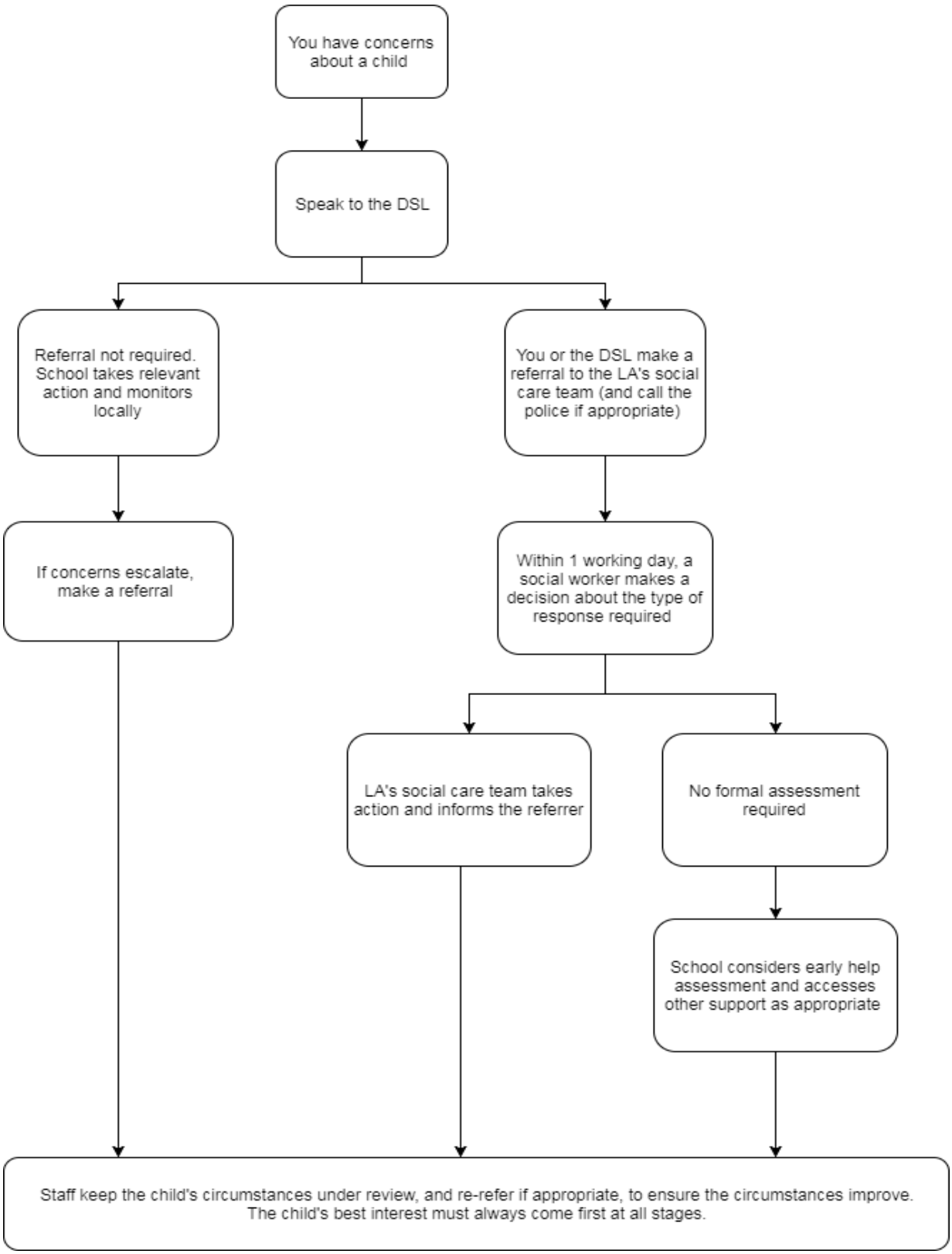
If you are worried that a student/YP is in immediate danger due to their mental health then please contact emergency services – Call 999.

If you have a mental health concern about a student/YP that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a student/YP's welfare (as opposed to believing a student/YP is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to students/YP, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other students

We recognise that students/YP are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for students.

We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse. However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of students hurting other students will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put students in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

See appendix 4 for more information about peer-on-peer abuse

Procedures for dealing with allegations of peer-on-peer abuse

If a student makes an allegation of abuse against another student:

- To person to whom this allegation is made must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all students/YP involved (including the victim(s), the student/YP against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)
- The DSL will contact the student/YP and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting students/YP and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of peer-on-peer abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images

- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female students, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure students are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support students/YP who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
    - How to recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
    - That even if there are no reports of Peer-on-peer abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
    - That if they have any concerns about a students/YP’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
        - Student/YP can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
        - A friend may make a report
        - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
        - A students/YP’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
    - That certain students/YP may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
    - That a student harming a peer could be a sign that the student/YP is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
    - The important role they have to play in preventing peer-on-peer abuse and responding where they believe a student/YP may be at risk from it
    - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
    - That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or LA social care to determine this
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’)

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a student to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the student to delete it
- Ask the student(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the student(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident and to reassure the student(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to student(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the students involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the students involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person’s developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or student/YPs social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the students involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a student has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the student at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

Students are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with students so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

7.10 Reporting systems for our students

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the student/YP's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring students feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for students to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for students
- Make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Students can report abuse to any member of staff but they are aware through signage and PSD/Keyworker sessions of the school's DSL and Deputies.
- Reassurances are always provided following disclosures to ensure students feel safe in submitting any concerns.

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding students/YP from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as 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, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

- Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
    - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
    - Keeping personal information private
    - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
    - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring students are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
    - Any photos taken must be uploaded onto the school's secure ChatPro and immediately deleted from the phone's memory.
- Make all students, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones, this includes, online bullying and intimidation, significant cases could result in suspension.
- Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation

- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit students exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to Acceptable Use of ICT and Searching, Screening and Confiscating policies, which you can find on our website **LINK**

8.1 Generative AI

The school recognises that generative artificial intelligence can create new safeguarding risks, including manipulation of images, creation of sexualised content, impersonation, fraud, bullying, harassment, grooming and exposure to harmful material.

Staff will consider whether AI has been used in any incident and will follow safeguarding procedures where AI-generated or manipulated content involves a young person.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a student/YP with the student/YP's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the student/YP, we will discuss this with the local authority YP's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other student/YP, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the students//YP involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other student/YP involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

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

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

10. Students with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that our students can face additional safeguarding challenges, and are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the student/YP's condition without further exploration
- Students being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other students
- The potential for students with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

We offer extra pastoral support for these students. This includes:

  - Keyworker groups
  - Key Stage Pastoral Leads
  - Non-class based pastoral assistant
  - Lead Pastoral practitioner
  - PSD/PSHE sessions

- CAMHS clinician
- Art Therapy

11. Students with a social worker

Students may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a student/YP's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable students/YP.

Where we are aware that a student has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

12. Looked-after and previously looked-after Child

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about students/YP's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of students/YP's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed a designated member of staff, Eve Pennington, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated member of staff will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how student premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

13. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

13.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a Child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

13.2 Other complaints

The Courtyard's complaints procedure will be followed where a student or parent raises a concern about poor practice that initially does not reach the threshold for Child protection action.

Staff members who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a student must remember that the welfare of the student/YP is paramount. The Courtyard's whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence. All concerns of poor practice or possible student/YP abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. We must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to students and we must act on every allegation. Staff members who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. Allegations against staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Courtyard's policy covering allegations of abuse.

13.3 Whistle-blowing

Please refer to the school's Whistleblowing Policy for full details. LINK

14. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our GDPR and Data Protection Policy.

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

Records will include:

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

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate student/YP protection file for each student/YP.

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

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

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

If a student/YP for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their student/YP protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main student file.

To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the student/YP arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the student/YP.

All records are kept securely on an electronic based icloud system. Only those members of staff with safeguarding lead responsibilities have access to these records. Information is retained for the length of time that a student is attending the school and then until they are 25 years of age. At this point the information is reviewed to consider if it is relevant to retain for longer.

Any information that is relevant to share with other agencies will be done via secure access electronic email, in line with our local safeguarding procedures.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks
- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

15. Training

15.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and student/YP protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
    - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
    - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all students

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify Students/YP at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and student/YP protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

All staff must read KCSIE 2026 Part one in full. The school's safeguarding training will complement, but not replace this requirement.

15.2 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake student/YP protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, attending local authority training, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

15.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and student/YP protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

15.4 Recruitment – interview panels

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

See appendix 2 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by Deborah Shepherd, Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Staff Handbook
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- Online safety
- Acceptable Use of ICT
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Relationships and sex education
- First aid
- Curriculum
- Privacy notices
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-Bullying

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a student/YP such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the student/YP's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a student/YP, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a student/YP that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the student/YP opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on students/YP. These may include interactions that are beyond a student/YP's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the student/YP participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing students /YP frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of students/YP.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a student/YP or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the student/YP 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
- Non-contact activities, such as involving students /YP in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging students/YP to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a student/YP 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 students/YP.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a student/YP's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the student/YP's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a student/YP 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 student/YP from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a student/YP's basic emotional needs.

Safer recruitment policy

Recruitment and selection process

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with students/YP have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students/YP.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and young people
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with students/YP
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account. Where roles are not exempt, all information is shared and considered.

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to students/YP (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our student/YP protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with students/YP, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
    - If they have a criminal history
    - Whether they are included on the barred list
    - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
    - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
    - Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with students/YP if they are not currently working with students/YP
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with students/YP
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

- Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

* Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, and deputy headteachers.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

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

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with students/YP; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

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

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a student/YP or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

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

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

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

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

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

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

Trainee/student teachers

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

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

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

Governors and members

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

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

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008).
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All governors will also have the following checks:

- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings

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

Adults who supervise students on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect students/YP from harm.

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

Students staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for students to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Allegations against staff (including low-level concerns) policy

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a student/YP, or may have harmed a student/YP, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a student/YP, and/or
- Behaved towards a student/YP or students/YP in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to students/YP, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with students/YP – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective student/YP protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

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

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

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

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

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the students/YP or students/YP concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with students/YP
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to students/YP
- Moving the student/YP or students/YP to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the academy trust.

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and students/YP's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

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

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or students/YP's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to students/YP or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with students/YP at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other students/YP in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to social care
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or students/YP's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the students/YP involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the student/YP involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their student/YP – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a student/YP, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a student/YP

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

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

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

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

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

Timescales

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

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

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

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

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the student/YP and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the student/YP and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

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

Record-keeping

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

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with social care or the police as appropriate.

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

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a student/YP to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a student/YP, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a student/YP, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of students/YP.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**

- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with students/YP
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of students/YP on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a student/YP on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating students

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's Staff Handbook. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

This report provides more information Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with Children]

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Children/YP missing from education

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

There are many circumstances where a student/YP may become missing from education, but some students/YP are particularly at risk. These include students/YP who:

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

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

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

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

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a student/YP into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children/YP or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a student/YP:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late

- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

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

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a student/YP into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and students/YP or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Students or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a student/YP:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

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

Peer-on-peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse is when student/YP abuse other students/YP. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the 2.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between students/YP (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- 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 (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where students/YP abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about Peer-on-peer abuse, or a student/YP makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between students/YP, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that students/YP displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Students/YP can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a student/YP may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between students/YP) and student/YP/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others – for example, the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on students/YP.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Students/YP who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Older students/YP may also experience and/or be the perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This can include sexual harassment.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on students/YP and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any students/YP in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the student/YP or students/YP arrive at school the following day. The DSL will provide support according to the student/YP's needs and update records about their circumstances.

The school participates in the local Operation Encompass arrangements where applicable. Operation Encompass is an early-intervention safeguarding partnership between police forces and educational settings designed to support children exposed to domestic abuse. The program requires police officers attending a domestic abuse incident involving a child to notify the designated safeguarding lead at the child's school before the start of the next school day. This rapid sharing of information allows teachers and school staff to offer immediate, tailored emotional or practical support, ensuring the child's needs are met without forcing them to disclose the event themselves. Notifications from the police will be handled promptly and confidentially by the DSL or nominated deputy, with appropriate student provided to the student.

Homelessness

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

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

Where a student/YP has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to social care.

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

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

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

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

FGM

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to students/YP affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a student is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

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

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

- The girl’s family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl’s community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
    - Having limited level of integration within UK society
    - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
    - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period

- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other students/YP about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (student/YP health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

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

The DSL will:

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

Preventing radicalisation

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces
- **Terrorism** is an action that:
    - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
    - Causes serious damage to property; or
    - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

  The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

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

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

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

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in students' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate and charity NSPCC say that signs that a student is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Students/YP who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a student, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between students/YP in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 students/YP of any age and sex
- Through a group of students/YP sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single student/YP or group of students/YP
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Students/YP who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on peer-on-peer abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt
- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns

- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a student/YP has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, students/YP with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students/YP are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (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

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a student/YP makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that a student/YP is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the student/YP has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced student/YP maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a student being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

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

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

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

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

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or

- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

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

Non-collection of students/YP

If a student/YP is not collected at the end of the day, we will:

Contact (telephone/email) parents/carers. Where parents/carers are not responding, the second point of contact will be called.

Students will be kept on site in the school office until they are collected. If parents do not respond by 6pm, the school will contact Islington's Children's Services Contact Team for further advice.

Records of such incidents are held on the school's electronic icloud system – CPoms.

Missing students

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing student/YP is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a student/YP goes missing, we will:

Contact parents/carers for more information.

Report to Islington's Children's Services Contact Team for further advice.

Contact the police.

Appendix 5: Work experience

The Courtyard work experience statement

Introduction

Work experience is an integral part of our students' entitlement to CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) and this clearly supports the 6 Experiences of Workplaces that students should have as part of the Gatsby Benchmarks. Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.

https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/the-benchmarks

Work experience gives young people vital insights into the world of work, encourages them to aspire to great things, and help them to prepare for their future. It bridges the gap between school, college and work and helps young people make decisions about their future and develop new and existing skills.

The opportunity to participate in work experience is provided to all students from Y11-Y14. All placements are personalised to the needs and abilities of each student.

The Courtyard work experience procedure sets out our approach and responsibilities that ensures the safety of our learners, staff and host employers. This procedure is for The Courtyard staff and host employers of work experience.

In careers education, the term 'work experience' is generally understood to refer to a time-limited placement that a young person undertakes on an employer's premises while in full-time study.

At The Courtyard, we offer three different types of work experience to meet the needs of our students, such as:

- Block work experience placements which are usually 1-2 hours a week for 6 consecutive weeks
- Extended placements are usually one to two days per week for up to a year.
- Placements can be virtual or in person with local, national and/ or international companies.

Our aims

Work experience should:

- Enhance students' knowledge of the world of work
- Develop students' employability skills
- Provide an insight into the skills, qualities and attitudes required by sectors and
- employers
- Provide opportunities for personal and social development – including self- confidence, time management, personal organisation and resilience
- Promote equality and opportunity and challenge stereotypes.
- Help prepare students for the world of work
- Enable students to make cross-curricular links
- Support the School's CEIAG provision
- Raise students' aspirations.

Provision

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Engage in a preparatory programme with an emphasis on Health and Safety
- Complete up to at least one placement a year
- Develop personal and social skills through active learning situations
- Relate to adults other than family and college staff with greater confidence

- Identify the skills and knowledge associated with a particular pathway via a specific occupation
- Participate in debriefing and feedback activities
- Record their experience and skills used in a work experience diary
- Widen their awareness of opportunities in the community to make informed choices about education, training and employment

Management and coordination

Approval of work placements is the responsibility of The Careers Lead, Elena Vidal.

National legislation from the HSE and the DfE will be followed to ensure the health, safety and safeguarding of students whilst on work experience. The school only authorises placements which have met all our safeguarding requirements.

Safety considerations

The HSE guidance for work experience and placements is invaluable and will be shared with staff and placement providers.
Guidance for:

Placement providers:
https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/employer/work-experience.htm

Schools:
https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/schools-colleges.htm

Considerations for the school

For those organising placements, they should simply ask sensible questions, in proportion to the level of risk, to satisfy themselves that those arrangements are in place. They should not be second-guessing employers' risk assessments or requiring additional paperwork. The Careers Lead carries out risk assessments for all WE placements to ensure they reflect the needs of our students. These are then signed by employers, students and parents/carers.

The Careers Lead will ensure that every student on work experience is checked at the placement at least once, to check attendance, wellbeing, and progress.
Any concerns should be reported immediately to the Careers Lead, or if necessary, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or team. All reported concerns must be documented, with evidence of actions taken and the outcome, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026.

Considerations for the placement provider

Under HSE guidance - the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990, students on work experience are treated as employees for health and safety purposes. The placement provider has the same duty of care to the students as it does to its own employees.
The provider must ensure that any young person on placement is protected from any risks which is a consequence of their lack of experience or an absence of awareness of existing or potential risks or the fact that a young person has not fully matured.

Employers' existing workplace risk assessments may already cover the risks that work experience students may be exposed to. Employer's Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance will need to be placed and details shared with the school.

Assessing the risk

The Careers Lead will visit the placement prior to students attending their work experience.
Employers are required to have risk assessments for their employees.
We will ask placement providers to carry out an appropriate workplace induction, which may include undertaking the risk assessments with students, in accordance with the HSE guidance.

- Students should never be left unsupervised within the workplace.
- For placements in low-risk environments, such as offices or shops, with everyday risks that will mostly be familiar to the student, we consider that existing arrangements for other employees should suffice.
- For environments with risks less familiar to the student (e.g. in light assembly or packing facilities), we will ask the placement provider to make arrangements to manage the risks. We consider this should include induction, supervision, site familiarisation, and any protective equipment needed.
- For a placement in a higher-risk environment such as construction, agriculture and manufacturing we will ask the provider to consider what work the student will be doing or observing, the risks involved and how these are managed, and to satisfy themselves that the instruction, training and supervisory arrangements have been properly thought through and that they work in practice.
- In addition to this, students' passports are shared with the employer. The Career Lead helps the employer create a meaningful work experience project that will meet the needs of the young people involved. Employers also receive Neurodiversity Awareness training.
- The Careers lead meets with students every Tuesday for a key worker session/ masterclass, and delivers assembly prior to the students going out on placement, which reiterates the importance of work experience and its benefits. This assembly will also be used to explain about health and safety in the workplace and confirms the procedure for raising any health and safety, as well as safeguarding, concerns.
- The school will reinforce these messages in the final few days before the students go out on placement, through key worker time.
- We request that the placement provider brief students on their first day of induction on health and safety; how to identify hazards and control measures that can be put in place to reduce risk of injury or accident.

Health and safety

A risk assessment is completed by The Courtyard and for individual learners (if needed) prior to the placement begins. An up-to-date employers' liability insurance is checked and shared by the employer with The Courtyard. These are reviewed annually.

Reporting of accidents during work experience

All accidents should be reported using the host business internal monitoring system. In addition, The Careers Lead should be notified immediately so that a report can be written in the first 24 hours. Parents/ carers will be informed immediately of any accidents/ injuries during work experience.

The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies in work experience arrangements which take place during term-time and have been organised by the school, in line with the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026.

Students must know they will be listened to and believed if they report any concerns. They must know that when on work experience, they can report to the DSL or any member of staff by calling the school during school hours, the out of hours safeguarding line, email or in person, at any time. The Careers Lead arranging the work experience must ensure this is understood by the student beforehand.

Disclosures to an employer

Employers should complete the basic "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSiE) training if they offer work experience opportunities to students. This training is essential for ensuring that all adults involved in providing work experience placements understand their responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students/YP and young people.

We will ask employers/providers to provide signed agreement to show they understand what to do in the event of a disclosure that gives reason to suspect that students may be at risk of harm. This is included in the Employer Work Placement Checklist.

Online work experience

If work experience is organised virtually, 1:1 online meeting with a provider will take place weekly during school hours. The school will make sure:

- The school is aware when the meeting is taking place and the length of the meeting.
- Parental consent has been given; if consent is verbal this must be logged so that there is a record.
- The young person knows who to report to if they have any concerns.
- The option of having a member of staff present has been discussed.

The school is not responsible for online meetings arranged independently by a young person or their parents/carers without consulting the school, and for those which are privately arranged and take place in the evenings, at weekends or in school holidays. Young people must, however, be reassured that they can report any concern to a member of staff regardless of when it took place, in line with the School's Student/YP Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Private arrangements for work experience

Where students undertake work experience which has been privately arranged by the parent or carer, it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to ensure that the student is kept safe. The school will seek an assurance in writing that the parent or carer is satisfied that the work placement is appropriate.

Monitoring and evaluation

All students who access the work experience programme will be asked to evaluate and reflect on their experiences immediately after they return from their placements. This will take place through, but will not necessarily be limited to, a formal evaluation and other reflective work through the pastoral system.

In addition, the work experience programme is reviewed by the school's Careers Lead responsible for work experience. This review is based on evidence from students and placement providers and will be presented as part of the CEIAG reporting procedures.

The review will:

- Consider the extent to which the programme meets the stated aims
- Consider any health and safety issues that have arisen, including from the induction provided
- Calculate the percentage of students arranging their own placement
- Calculate the percentage of students completing a placement
- Consider reasons for failure to complete a placement
- Identify areas for improvement, which will be incorporated into the CEIAG development plan.

Other policies and documents which are relevant to this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Courtyard Safeguarding and Child Protection 2026