



Policy name:	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
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Key safeguarding personnel				
	The Mead Primary School (Hilperton site)	The Mead Primary School (Wingfield site)	Castle Mead School	River Mead School
Headteacher	Mark Stenton		Emma Larkham	Louise Harrison
DDSL(s)	Kate Seviour Becc Millard	Emma Stacey Jon Hackett	Gaby Simons Leanne Cunningham Heather Gilbert	Leala Purdie Emma Lewis Kate Miller
Nursery	Becc Millard	Emma Stacey	Theo Gaines	Emma Lewis
Nominated Academy Advisor	Lucy-Kate Ridewood		Jayne Bullock	Colin Kay
Chair of Academy Advisor Board	Rachel Watts		Jayne Bullock	Colin Kay
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Kate Seviour		Heather Gilbert	Leala Purdie
Trust Lead	Lyssy Bolton, CEO			
Safeguarding Trustee	Jayne Bullock			
The key safeguarding responsibilities for each of the roles above are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)				

Children's social care referrals	
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	0300 456 0108
Out of hours	0300 456 0100
If you believe a child is at immediate risk of significant harm or injury, you must call the police on 999	

Introduction

The Mead Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following key documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- The procedures of the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (formerly WSCB)
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- All our pupils are safe and protected from harm

- Safeguarding procedures are in place to help pupils to feel safe and learn to stay safe
- Adults in the school community are aware of the expected behaviours and the school's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection

The Mead Trust fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection. This policy aims to promote a 'Safer Culture' and clarify these responsibilities and the processes and practices staff and adults in school will be expected to follow. We recognise that because of their day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.



There are three key elements to our Trust's approach to safeguarding:

- **Prevention:** Positive and safe school environment, safer recruitment, careful and vigilant teaching, accessible pastoral care, support to pupils, good adult role models
- **Protection:** Agreed procedures are followed and staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns
- **Support:** To pupils, who may have been at risk of significant harm and the way staff respond to their concerns and any work that may be required

Scope

Safeguarding children is defined as:

- Ensuring that children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- Acting to enable all children to have the best life chances
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development and
- Protecting children from maltreatment

The term 'safeguarding children' covers a range of measures including child protection procedures. It encompasses a whole-school preventative approach to keeping children safe, including online that incorporates pupil health and safety; school behaviour management and preventing child-on-child abuse; supporting pupils with medical conditions; Relationships, Sex and Health (RSHE) education and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education; providing first aid and site security.

Consequently, this policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the Governance Community and should be read alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our pupils:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships, Sex and Health Education / PSHE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour for Learning Policy (including pupil use of mobile and smart technology)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptable Use Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Behaviour Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistleblowing Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relational practice principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Code of Conduct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality Statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of Medicines Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility targets 	

This policy applies to all staff in our school. For the purposes of this policy:

- Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full-time or part-time, in a paid or regular voluntary capacity (including supply staff and consultants)
- A volunteer is a person who performs an activity that involves spending time, unpaid in school (except for approved expenses)
- Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents
- Child refers to all children on our school roll and any child under the age of 18 who comes into contact with our school. This includes unborn babies

Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to a child at school, outside of school and online are within the scope of this policy.

Purpose of policy

The Mead Trust fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection. This policy aims to promote a 'Safer Culture' and clarify these responsibilities and the processes and practices staff and adults in school will be expected to follow. We recognise that because of their day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.

Expectations

All staff are:

- Familiar with this safeguarding policy
- Alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse and wider safeguarding issues
- Aware of the importance of professional curiosity
- Able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy
- Able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child
- Involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans as required

All staff and designated Safeguarding Academy Advisors: have read and understood Part 1 or Annex A of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2023).

School leaders, staff who work directly with children and Safeguarding Academy Advisors: have also read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2023) Annex B.

School leaders and staff with a pastoral role: have also read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2023) Part 5.

Governance Community

As key strategic decision makers and vision setters for the Trust, the Board will make sure that our policies and procedures are in line with national and local safeguarding requirements. Academy Advisory Groups will work with the senior leaders to make sure the following safeguarding essentials are in place:

Training/Teaching	Policy/Procedures	Key safeguarding roles
Whole school approach to broad and balanced curriculum embedding safeguarding teaching	Child-on-child abuse	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a senior member of the leadership team
D/DSL training	Pupil voice	
Designated teacher training	Online safety	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
KCSiE Part 1 or Annex A (and Annex B and Part 5 for staff working directly with children)	Whistleblowing	Designated teacher for children looked-after (even if there are no LAC on roll)
Staff training, including regular safeguarding updates	Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice), incl. low-level concerns about staff conduct	Senior mental health lead
Children taught about keeping safe online	Early help	Pastoral and well-being staff
Online safety training for staff	Mental Health	Nominated Academy Advisor and Trustee for whistleblowing
Preventing radicalisation	Multi-agency working	
Teaching staff confidence to deliver RSHE/PSHE to all pupils	Children who are absent and/or missing from education	Nominated Trustee for filtering and monitoring & online safety
Annual review of online safety arrangements	Children with SEND and a physical health issue	Filtering and monitoring & online safety lead
	Reporting abuse, incl. dealing with a child at immediate risk / SVPP procedures	
	Honour based abuse (HBA)	
	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	
	Behaviour policy	
	Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) policy	
	Staff contribution to policy	

	Safeguarding policy review	
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Concerns and allegations management

Our Safeguarding Trustee and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) are responsible for liaising with the local authority Designated Officer for Allegations (DOfA) and other partner agencies in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Headteacher.

See also 'Managing concerns and allegations against staff'.

Audit

The nominated Academy Advisor for safeguarding collaborates with the Headteacher and the D/DSL to complete an annual safeguarding audit return to the local authority.

Safer Recruitment

Our annual monitoring cycle includes a review of the school's safer recruitment practice, including scrutiny of the Single Central Record.

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher ensures that the policies and procedures, adopted by The Trust (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood by staff, children and parents, by re-visiting regularly and adhered to by all staff and other adults who volunteer or provide a service within school.

The Headteacher reports at least three times per year to the Academy Advisory Group around the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures, and in particular, child-on-child incidents, including all aspects of trend analysis. The school's approach to online safety and filtering and monitoring is reviewed annually as a minimum as part of this process.

Governors ensure that safeguarding is an agenda item for every full governing body meeting.

This policy is reviewed annually or earlier as required by changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

The nominated Academy Advisory for Safeguarding meets the DSL every term to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

Monitoring and evaluation for schools within the Trust will be undertaken each year through Trust Quality Reviews and External Safeguarding Audits. This information will be shared with the Trust's Standards & Effectiveness Group (SEG) at Board level.

Each school monitors its own practice via regular internal safeguarding reviews.

Each school submits a Wiltshire Safeguarding audit each year and follows any recommendations made. The Headteacher ensures that safeguarding is an agenda item for every leadership meeting

The Governance Community has a role in monitoring safeguarding by:

- Appointing a nominated Safeguarding Academy Advisor and a Safeguarding Trustee. These colleagues are supported in their role

- Ensuring that safeguarding is a routine agenda item for Academy Advisor Meetings, Standards and Effectiveness Group Meetings and Full Board Meetings
- Reviewing Child Protection practice in the school via the termly (3 x per year) Safeguarding Reports created by each school within the Trust and the annual external audit report and subsequent Quality Reviews
- Auditing safeguarding measures annually alongside the DSL using Wiltshire Local Authority's Annual Safeguarding Audit

The Headteacher ensures that safeguarding is a regular item for staff meetings.

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier as required by changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

Mandatory procedures – staff and adults at school

Safer recruitment

All staff are subject to safer recruitment processes and checks, and we follow the guidance set out in Part 3 of KCSiE (2023).

We scrutinise all applications for paid or voluntary posts. We undertake interviews and make appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We maintain a single central record (SCR) of the essential checks as set out in KCSiE, that have been carried out and certificates obtained. The SCR applies to:

- All staff (including supply staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school
- All governors / members of the Governance Community

Assurances are sought for contractors who are required on site, including identification checks on arrival. Appropriate vetting checks are carried out by the school for self-employed individuals.

Visitors

All visitors complete a signing in/out process, wear a school ID badge and are provided with key safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel in school.

Scheduled visitors in a professional role (e.g. fire officer, police, NSPCC staff) are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at school. Careful consideration is given to the suitability of any external organisations. School complete an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered by the scheduled visitor prior to booking a visit.

If the visit is unscheduled and the visitor is unknown to the school, we will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity, if necessary.

Site safety

Risk assessments are undertaken and maintained in accordance with the school's health and safety policy.

Use of school premises for non-school activities

Where schools hire or rent out facilities / premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, or providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) the DSL must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

The school ensures that when our premises are hired or rented to other organisations (ASC, evening and weekend clubs) including shared site providers who work with children, those organisations adhere to the guidance for out-of-school settings.

The school must seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend the services or activities are children on the school roll.

The school should ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

If an allegation against an adult is made relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, as with any other safeguarding allegation, the DSL should follow this policy and associated procedures, including informing the DOFA if appropriate.

Off site visits

We carry out a risk assessment prior to any off-site visit and designate the specific roles and responsibilities of each adult, whether employed or volunteers. We seek written assurances from any alternative provision provider that appropriate safer recruitment checks have been completed, and safeguarding policy & procedures are in place. A site visit is also completed by DSL and/or SENCO.

Where there are safeguarding concerns or allegations that happen offsite, staff will follow the procedures described above and in the SVPP flowcharts as appropriate. A copy of the flowcharts is taken on off-site visits for reference.

See also Training.

Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice)

Our schools are committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our pupils underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour. The government's 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People', updated February 2022, indicates that all staff and volunteers must always conduct themselves professionally.

The Code of Conduct clearly outlines the school's expectations for all staff, visitors and volunteers in our schools. All members of staff receive a copy of the Code of Conduct when they join the schools as part of their induction process.

The Staff Behaviour Policy sets out staff behaviours that should be avoided as well as those that constitute safe practice and supports our commitment to safeguarding children.

Teaching staff are additionally expected to act within the guidance of the 'personal and professional conduct' section of the Teachers' Standards.

Our underpinning principle that sets out expectations for Relational Teaching within our Trust enables children to develop in a positive emotional environment.

As part of their induction process, all staff will be made aware of these policies and expectations and, where necessary, receive updated training. This will include an understanding of indicators of abuse.

Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If staff are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they should seek medical advice. Schools must ensure that staff only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. Staff medication on the school premises must be stored securely and out of reach of children at all times.

Identifying the signs

All staff know how to recognise and are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and wider safeguarding issues, including but not limited to child-on-child sexual violence and harassment, child-on-child abuse and exploitation, 'all' risks outside of the home and within the local area including online. Definitions of abuse, set out in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners' (2015), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2023) and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (2021) along with notes from safeguarding training, are important reference documents for all staff.

Every member of staff is provided with a copy of Part 1 or Annex A of KCSiE which they are required to read, and which also includes supporting guidance about several specific safeguarding issues. Staff who work directly with children are also required to read Annex B and Part 5 of KCSiE (2023).

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap one another. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting or online by those known to them, or more rarely, by others. Children may be abused by an adult/s or by another child/ren.

The following link provides helpful information relating to a wide variety of types of abuse: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>

Responding to concerns/disclosures of abuse

We recognise that children will talk to an adult they know and trust and therefore our expectation is that this person will listen to the child about their concerns and then report this to the DSL or their deputy as soon as possible afterwards. The DSL will consider next steps to be taken, including consultation with, or referral to, MASH / Children's Social Care.

If a child discloses harm to any staff member, the school's role is to recognise and refer abuse, not to investigate. This is to avoid contamination of evidence gained in any subsequent investigation undertaken by the Police and / or the Social Services. This does not mean however that the staff member involved cannot ask any questions but must avoid anything that might be interpreted as 'leading' the child.

If a child wishes to confide in you the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Stay calm
- Take the child to a private and safe place if possible
- Reassure the child and stress that he / she is not to blame and they were right to tell you
- Listen to the child and tell them that you believe them and are taking what is being said seriously
- Tell the child you have to speak to someone who can help keep them safe and what you are going to do next
- Keep questions to a minimum and encourage the child to use his / her own words - do not interview the child

Questioning should only include TED questions:

- Tell me
- Explain
- Describe

Staff may:

- Use the mirroring technique i.e. “My dad hit me last night” – respond by “Your dad hit you last night?”
- Record as soon as possible exactly what the child has said to you, what you have heard, what you saw and any other relevant information
- Immediately inform the DSL or DDSL (and nobody else) so that an appropriate action can be taken to protect the pupil if necessary

Flowcharts provided by Wiltshire Council Safeguarding Team and SVPP that set out the required procedure for staff to follow when they have a safeguarding concern about a child are displayed in the staffroom and adult cloakrooms for easy reference.

Staff adhere to the organisation’s safeguarding training requirements when concerned about abuse or when responding to a disclosure of abuse. Staff understand that they must NOT:

- Take photographs of any injuries
- Postpone or delay the opportunity for the child to talk
- Take notes while the child is speaking or ask the child to write an account
- Try to investigate the allegation
- Promise confidentiality e.g. say they will keep ‘the secret’
- Approach or inform the alleged abuser

All staff record any concern about or disclosure by a pupil of abuse or neglect and report this to the D/DSL using CPOMS. It is the responsibility of each adult in school to ensure that the D/DSL receives the record of concern without delay. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that concerns and discussions are written up properly and acted on appropriately. The DSL should be alerted in person of any concern that is urgent and requires immediate attention. This is then followed up by reporting the concern via the CPOMS system.

In the absence of the D/DSL, staff members know to speak directly to the MASH. In some circumstances, the D/DSL or member of staff seeks advice by ringing the MASH for advice. The D/DSL will liaise with safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together (2018) and will refer to National Police Chief’s Council guidance for schools to understand when they should consider calling the police.

The D/DSL will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. The D/DSL consistently monitors all children with concerns, whether a referral to MASH/IFD has been made or not.

During term time, the DSL and/or a DDSL is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The D/DSL provides feedback to any staff who share concern/s.

We are also aware that the member of staff or volunteer to whom the disclosure has been made may also be in need of support and the school's senior leadership team will ensure that such support is given.

The voice of the child is central to our safeguarding practice and pupils are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

Supporting children

Following any disclosure from a child, staff will be involved on a 'need to know' basis so that the child can be supported throughout the process that follows. This may include time out and / or additional support from specific adults who they trust or feel comfortable with. However, there is no set process as the needs of each child are likely to be different, so the school will respond accordingly.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Schools may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

Each school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum
- The ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
- The Behaviour for Learning Policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils. Staff will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- Having a Parent Support Advisor (PSA) who liaises with parents and external agencies
- Liaison with other agencies supporting the pupil

Online safety

The Trust's online safety procedures and protocols conform with KCSiE para 138.

Online safety is a running and interrelated theme which is reflected in our policies and procedures. Children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. Online safety is considered as part of our whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training (including at induction) and curriculum planning. A personalised or contextualised approach is taken for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND.

Parents and carers are offered advice and guidance in support of identifying the risks that may be present to children online.

School acknowledges the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks, the school will follow its policy on the use of mobile and smart technology in school to safeguard children and will follow child-on-child abuse procedures when mobile phones are used by a child whilst in school to sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content. The school adheres to the DFE Filtering and Monitoring standards, and the Cyber Security Standards set out in KCSiE (2023). Our online safety mechanisms are reviewed annually.

Monitoring and filtering

We understand that our schools should provide a safe environment to learn and work, including when online. Filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The Trust's filtering system blocks access to:

- Illegal child sexual abuse material
- Unlawful terrorist content
- Adult content
- Offensive language

In addition, our filtering provider is a member of Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and signed up to Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit list (CTIRU).

The Board of Trustees has overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring, overseen by the Safeguarding Trustee. The Trust Central Team is responsible for:

- Procuring filtering and monitoring systems
- Documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why
- Reviewing the effectiveness of provision
- Overseeing reports

The DSL in each school is responsible for making sure that all staff:

- Understand their role
- Are appropriately trained
- Follow policies, processes and procedures
- Act on reports and concerns

The Trust Central Team, the DSL of each school, and IT service providers work closely together in all aspects of filtering and monitoring. We acknowledge that day to day management of filtering and monitoring systems requires the specialist knowledge of both safeguarding and IT staff to be effective. The DSL should work closely together with IT service providers to meet the needs of their setting. The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and online safety, which includes overseeing and acting on:

- Filtering and monitoring reports
- Safeguarding concerns
- Checks to filtering and monitoring systems

The IT service provider has technical responsibility for:

- Providing and maintaining filtering and monitoring systems and reports
- Completing actions following concerns or checks to systems
- Making sure monitoring systems are working as expected
- Providing reporting on pupil device activity

- Working with the Trust Central Team and DSLs to procure systems, identify risk and carry out reviews and checks
- Receiving safeguarding training, including online safety
- Recording and reporting safeguarding concerns to the DSL
- Providing monitoring data in a format that the DSL can understand
- Ensuring users are identifiable to the school so concerns can be traced back to an individual, including guest accounts

The Board of Trustees ensures that filtering and monitoring provision is reviewed, potentially as part of a wider online safety review, at least annually. The review will be conducted by members of the Trust Central Team, the DSL of each school, the IT service provider and the Safeguarding Trustee. The results of the review will be recorded for reference. A review will be done as a minimum annually, or when:

- A safeguarding risk is identified
- There is a change in working practice, like remote access or BYOD
- New technology is introduced

All staff can report concerns regarding the monitoring and filtering of content by raising a ticket via email or over the phone with the school's IT service provider. All staff should raise a ticket and report a concern if they:

- Witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed
- Can access unsuitable material
- Are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering logs
- Identify a failure in the software or abuse of the system
- Believe there are unreasonable restrictions that affect teaching and learning or administrative tasks
- Notice abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material

Staff are responsible for:

- Providing effective supervision of the use of devices by pupils
- Taking steps to maintain awareness of how devices are being used by pupils
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL

Filtering and monitoring systems are checked to ensure they work on new devices and services before they are released to staff and pupils.

[Managing concerns and allegations against staff](#) (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises)

The guidance in KCSIE (Part Four) is followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including supply teachers and volunteers, has:

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

We follow the procedure set out by the SVPP 'Allegations against adults' flowchart which is displayed in the staffroom and adult cloakrooms for easy reference.

Where anyone in the school has a concern about the behaviour of an adult (including online) who works or volunteers at the school, including supply staff and contractors, and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises, they must immediately consult the Headteacher/Principal who will refer to the local authority Designated Officer for Allegations (DOfA).

Any concern or allegation against the Headteacher will be reported to the CEO without informing the Headteacher.

All staff must remember that the welfare of a child is paramount and must not delay raising concerns for fear a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. We promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In addition to the concern/allegation management process, the school's DSL will also refer suspected abuse to the MASH as described in 'responding to a concern.'

All members of staff and volunteers have read and signed to confirm they have understood the school's Staff Behaviour Policy (for safer working practice), all supply staff and contractors are made aware of expectations of their behaviour.

Concerns and allegations reported relating to supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers for investigation and potential referral to DOfA.

We will appoint a 'case manager' to lead any investigation where the reported allegation does not meet the allegations threshold to consider a referral to the DOfA. This is the headteacher or where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the CEO.

Managing low-level concerns about adults

We operate a 'low-level' concerns policy in accordance with KCSIE. 'Low-level' refers to behaviour that is: inconsistent with expectations set out in the Staff Code of Conduct, Staff Behaviour Policy and Safer Working Practice Guidance, or our relational teaching principle. This includes inappropriate conduct outside of work, and behaviour of concern that does not meet the allegations threshold, or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the DOfA.

All low-level concerns will be reported to the Headteacher; low-level concerns about the Headteacher will be reported to the CEO. The low level reporting form can be accessed on the staff resources page of the Trust website.

We will:

- Ensure all staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is (as in the Staff Code of Conduct, Staff Behaviour Policy and Safer Working Practice Guidance, or our relational

teaching principle) and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others

- Empower staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns
- Provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised, for both the child/ren and the adult
- Respond to reports of low-level concerns in accordance with our HR conduct procedures by addressing unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage. If the concern has been raised via a third party, the Headteacher will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:
 - Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
 - To the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reporting low-level concerns helps to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing, retained and reviewed to help recognise any weakness in the school safeguarding system so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Whistleblowing

In accordance with our Trust's whistleblowing policy and procedures all staff and pupils can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. Our whistleblowing procedures (including our child-friendly whistleblowing mechanisms), which are also reflected in staff training and our staff behaviour policy, and shared with pupils, are in place for such concerns to be raised with school senior leaders. Systems are in place and well promoted so that children can confidently report concerns or abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with school and Trust senior leaders or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 from 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk
- The Safeguarding Academy Advisor or Trustee

Escalation of concerns

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between colleagues and between agencies.

Staff must be confident and able to professionally disagree and challenge decision-making as an entirely legitimate activity; a part of our professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice. Staff are encouraged to press for re-consideration if they believe a decision to act/not act in response to a concern raised about a child is wrong. In such cases the SVPP Case Resolution Protocol is used if necessary.

If we are on the receiving end of a professional challenge, we see this as an opportunity to reflect on our decision making.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.

Staff have a professional responsibility to share any relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigating agencies. Information should only be shared with those who need to know. The school:

- Liaises with partner organisations eg alternative provisions to ensure any safeguarding records for learners are shared on transition and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term:
 - By the setting/school/organisation previously attended by the child
 - By our DSL when the child leaves our school
- For any child dual-registered with another school/setting/organisation, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of the placed pupil thus the DSL will regularly liaise with the DSL at that base to ensure information is shared in the child's best interests. This includes contextual safeguarding information about relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online to enable assessment and intervention to happen within these extra-familial contexts
- Keeps clear and comprehensive written records of all pupil safeguarding and child protection concerns using a standard recording form, with a body map, including how the concern was followed up and resolved as well as a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Ensures all pupil safeguarding and child protection records are kept securely in a locked location
- Ensures the records incorporate the wishes and views of the pupil

Safeguarding files will be transferred separately from other records and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. In addition, the DSL may consider it appropriate to share information with the new school in advance of the child leaving.

The D/DSL acts in accordance with Information Sharing – Department for Education (DfE) (2018) and in line with the Wiltshire Council Record Keeping Guidance which includes details about file retention.

Information about pupils at risk of harm is shared with members of staff in keeping with the seven golden rules for sharing information in the DfE guidance (necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure).

We are committed to work in partnership with parents and carers. In most situations, we will discuss initial concerns with them. However, the D/DSL will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- Place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- Place an adult at increased risk of serious harm
- Prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime

- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult

When we become aware that a child is being privately fostered, we remind the carer/parent of their legal duty to notify Wiltshire Children's Social Care. We follow this up by contacting Children's Social Care directly.

Mandatory procedures – supporting children

A culture of listening to children

We have a whole school approach to listening to children and have systems in place which create an environment where children feel safe to share their concerns and worries and know they will be taken seriously. These systems operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Children can safely express their views and give feedback. The school's safeguarding team are clearly identifiable to our pupils. We regularly gather pupil voice via forums and surveys, this data informs our practice and policies.

Curriculum – teaching about safeguarding

Our pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum (age and stage of development appropriate) that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

We provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety, and well-being. The PSHE and citizenship curriculum, incorporating Relationships, Sex and Health (RSHE) education specifically includes the following objectives:

- Developing pupil self-esteem and communication skills
- Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety
- Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships and consent)

Examples of topics:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem

Remote learning

If the school is required to change the way provision to children is offered due to exceptional circumstances e.g. during a pandemic lockdown, self-isolation, staff responsibilities to remain alert to the signs and risks of abuse to children will continue to apply. In such circumstances the DSL will:

- Work closely with social care and partner agencies to support children in these circumstances and to identify children who may be at risk for the first time and/or benefit from additional support
- Use specific local and national guidance about safeguarding in such circumstances to inform practice e.g. UK Safer internet centre guidance, DfE safeguarding and remote education and will ensure staff, children, and families are provided with written:
 - Amended DSL arrangements as required (names, location and contact details)
 - Temporary changes to procedures for working with children e.g. online
 - Amended procedures for reporting concerns
 - Safeguarding training arrangements

- Timescales for such changes so that all children, families and staff understand when such arrangements will end, and arrangements revert to those in place prior to the events leading to the need for the temporary changes

We will ensure the curriculum we offer during such circumstances, continues to promote learners' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development.

Early help

All our staff can identify children who may benefit from early help as a problem emerges and discuss this with the D/DSL.

The D/DSL uses:

- The Wiltshire's Integrated Front Door (MASH and Early Support Hub)
- The Digital Assessment and Referral Tool as appropriate as part of a holistic assessment of the child's needs
- The Multi-Agency Thresholds guidance for Safeguarding Children on the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) website about suitable action to take when a pupil has been identified as making inadequate progress or having an unmet need
- Liaises with Wiltshire SEND service
- Various resources to identify and respond to harmful sexual behaviour

Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or physical health issues

Pupils with additional needs or certain health conditions face an increased risk of abuse and neglect. Staff take extra care to interpret correctly apparent signs of abuse or neglect. We never assume that behaviour, mood or injury relates to the pupil's additional needs without further exploration. Staff understand that additional challenges can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in pupils with SEND, including communication barriers. Staff recognise that children with SEND are also at a higher risk of peer group isolation and can be disproportionately affected by bullying (including prejudiced-based bullying).

To address those additional challenges, extra pastoral support is considered for children with SEND or physical health issues and they are also encouraged to discuss their concerns. The D/DSL works with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) to identify pupils with additional communication needs and whenever possible, these pupils are given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communication skills.

The use of 'reasonable force' in school

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. We follow DfE advice for schools available at [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools](#).

All staff will follow our behaviour policy and all pupils are encouraged to follow these expectations to reduce the need for the need for 'use of reasonable force.' Staff will work in collaboration with pupils and parents/carers to plan positive, proactive behaviour support which may include support

plans, referral to specialist agencies and agreeing actions to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour.

Mandatory procedures – specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues

Child-on-child abuse

All children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

In addition, we have a zero-tolerance approach and will respond to all reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school, and/or online.

Staff recognise that while both boys and girls can abuse their peers, it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys instigators of such abuse. Children who are LGBTQ+ may be targeted by other children. Child-on-child abuse is not tolerated, passed off as “banter” or seen as “part of growing up”. The different forms of child-on-child abuse is likely to include, but not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- ‘Upskirting’ or any picture taken under a person’s clothing without their permission or them knowing to obtain sexual gratification or cause humiliation, distress or alarm
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, as defined by Sexual offences act 2003 which considers rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault, all types of sexual violence. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can be between two children, or a group of children and can occur online and offline

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

Any pupil who may have been victimised along with any other child affected by child-on-child abuse, will be supported through the school’s pastoral system and the support will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

Pupils who display such harmful behaviours, will be supported in the same way as all other children for whom there is a safeguarding concern.

The school, through its ethos and curriculum (particularly its PSHE curriculum) will address these issues with children at the appropriate level for their age.

We will address inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) as this can be an important intervention that may help prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

We acknowledge that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. Staff maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned.

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

- A relevant, effective curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe. The curriculum is updated to reflect changes in legislation, and the mandatory teaching of Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education
- Established/publicised systems for pupils to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously
- Training to all staff so they understand that child-on-child abuse can and does happen and are trained to be alert to any behaviours that could cause concern
- A clear procedure for all staff to report all incidents as a safeguarding concern to the school D/DSL

Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

The DSL will follow local and national guidance when there has been a report of sexual violence and harassment between children. This will include liaising with other professionals to develop robust risk and needs assessments and multi-agency safety planning with appropriate specialist targeted work for pupils who are identified as posing a potential risk to other children. This is done using a Contextual Safeguarding approach to ensure assessments consider risks posed by any wider environmental factors present in a child’s life. The DSL will record specifically the time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer.

The NSPCC has a dedicated helpline 0800 136 663 to provide children who are victims of sexual abuse in schools with appropriate support and advice. The helpline also provides support to parents and professionals.

Serious violence

We are committed to success in learning for all our pupils as one of the most powerful indicators in the prevention of youth crime.

Our curriculum includes teaching conflict resolution skills and understanding risky situations to help our children develop the social and emotional skills they need to thrive.

Staff are trained to recognise both the early warning signs of contextual risks and that pupils may be susceptible to exploitation and getting involved in gangs as well as indicators that a pupil is involved in serious violent crime. They are also aware of the associated risks and know the measures put in place to minimise such risks.

Children who are absent and/or missing from education

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. If a member of staff or volunteer becomes aware that a child is missing, or missing education, they need to report their concern to the DSL immediately.

If a staff member knows of any child who may be:

- Absent from education persistently, or for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions
- Missing – whereabouts unknown or

- Missing education – (compulsory school age (5-16) with no school place and not electively home educated)

The school will monitor attendance and challenge poor attendance or specific patterns of absence to satisfy themselves that there is no cause for concern with regard to child protection.

The designated teacher for LAC and care leavers discusses any unauthorised/unexplained absence of Looked After Children with Virtual School when required.

The DSL shares any unauthorised/unexplained absence of children who have an allocated social worker within 24 hours.

Children who do not attend school regularly can be at increased risk of abuse and neglect. Where there is unauthorised/unexplained absence, and after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family without success, the DSL follows the SVPP procedure and consults/refers to the MASH team as appropriate.

Where there are no known welfare concerns about a pupil, we follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and report concerns to the Education Welfare Service for instance where a child:

- Has 10 days or more continuous absence from school without an explanation and / or
- Has left school suddenly and the destination is unknown and / or
- Has not taken up an allocated school place as expected

The school will inform the Local Authority if a parent intends to electively educate their child at home (EHE). The school will also refer to the MASH team any child being withdrawn from school with the intent to be electively home educated (EHE) where there are safeguarding concerns.

Mental health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff understand that:

- Abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Staff are aware of how these experiences can impact on children's mental health, behaviour and education
- They have a duty to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will report this concern using the agreed reporting mechanisms.

Domestic abuse

Staff understand that domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass

but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional harm. All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

The DSL liaises with partner agencies as part of 'Encompass' in Wiltshire. When police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the DSL ensures the organisation receives up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and will ensure key staff provide emotional and practical support to the child according to their needs.

Preventing radicalisation

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

Staff use their judgement, which is supported by training, in identifying pupils who might be susceptible to radicalisation and speak to the D/DSL if they are concerned about a pupil. The D/DSL will always act proportionately and this may include making a Prevent referral to the Channel support programme or to the MASH.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Staff will inform the D/DSL immediately if they suspect a girl is at risk of FGM.

In addition, there is a statutory duty upon individual teachers to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage.

Since February 2023 it has been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. Staff will inform the D/DSL immediately if they suspect a child is at risk of forced marriage.

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

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak or share their concerns.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education curriculum.

'Honour-based' Abuse (HBA)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation

(FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the DSL as a matter of urgency.

Staff training

Induction

The welfare of all our pupils is of paramount importance. All staff including Governance Community members and regular volunteers are informed of our safeguarding policy and procedures including online safety, at induction. Our induction schedule for staff also includes:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures
- Acceptable Use Policy
- KCSiE update
- Whistleblowing policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct for Staff
- Role and identities of the DSL and DDSL
- For appropriate roles, the school's response to children who are absent and/or missing from education, and the school's protocol about managing absence
- Procedure to follow in case of an allegation being raised against an adult
- Professional disagreement and escalation including the SVPP Case Resolution Protocol

Safeguarding training

Training for all staff is delivered annually to ensure staff understand their role in safeguarding. Any member of staff not present at this whole school session must undertake this statutory training requirement on their return.

In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email and staff meetings) as necessary and at least annually. All staff also receive training in online safety and this is updated as necessary.

Advanced training

The D/DSL has additional multi agency training which is updated every two years as a minimum. The D/DSL also attend multi-agency courses relevant to school needs. Their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually e.g. via e-bulletins or safeguarding networking events with other D/DSLs. The D/DSL attend a Wiltshire MASH tour.

Safer Recruitment

At least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. This training is updated every five years as a minimum.

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

The designated teacher for looked after children has attended training specific to the role.

Preventing radicalisation

Annual safeguarding training and/or updates will include Prevent awareness training.

Staff support

Due to the demanding, often distressing nature of child protection work, we support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through the challenges of this aspect of their role with a senior leader and to seek further support as appropriate. We provide external supervision for DSLs/DDSs three times per year or as required.

Governance Community

As well as the school's safeguarding induction programme, all members of the Trust's Governance Community receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. Safeguarding training is updated annually and our Governance Community are also encouraged to attend whole school safeguarding and child protection training.

Appendix 1 - Related legislation and key documents

Children Act 1989 (and 2004 update): The Children Act 1989 gives every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to have enquires made to safeguard his or her welfare. The Act place duties on several agencies, including schools, to assist Social Services departments acting on behalf of children and young people in need (s17) or enquiring into allegations of child abuse (s47).

Education Act 2002: This requires schools to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education.
Sexual Offences Act 2003 - This act sets out an offence of 'abuse of trust' - a sexual or otherwise inappropriate relationship between an adult who is responsible for young people and a young person in his/her care.

Information Sharing – Department for Education (DfE) Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018: This advice is for all frontline practitioners and senior managers working with children, young people, parents and carers who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case by case basis.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), section 26: requires all schools, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Mental health and behaviour in schools (2018): advice to help schools to support pupils whose mental health problems manifest themselves in behaviour. It is also intended to be helpful to staff in alternative provision settings, although some of the legislation mentioned will only apply to those alternative provision settings that are legally classified as schools.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006): Section 53(3) and (4) of this applies to schools if they broker student accommodation with host families for which the host family receives a payment from a third party, such as a language school. At a future date, the regulated activity provider will have a duty to carry out a barred list check on any new carer – section 34ZA Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

The Teachers’ Standards (2013): set a clear baseline of expectations for the professional practice and conduct of teachers and define the minimum level of practice expected of teachers in England.
Children Missing Education (2016) Statutory guidance for local authorities and advice for other groups on helping children who are missing education get back into it.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021): Advice for schools and colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children.

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017): Advice for schools on effectively preventing and tackling bullying.

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (2016): Advice for headteachers and school staff on developing school behaviour policy, including an overview of their powers and duties.