

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

**This Trust Policy must be read in conjunction with the
Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures for each individual school**

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Statement of intent

Twynham Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every pupil, both inside and outside of our schools' premises. We implement a Trust-wide preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken and that healthy relationships are promoted. The Trust is also committed to a zero-tolerance policy with regards to sexual harassment and violence.

This policy has been created to outline a clear framework relating to any aspects of safeguarding within the Trust and should be followed by:

- All members of staff.
- Any school within the Trust.
- Any committee of the Trust Board.
- Individual Trustees and the Trust Board.
- The Trust, including Trust staff.
- Any associate members of the Trust Board and/or its committees.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that members of the Trust Board, headteachers and Trust and school staff understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse, and know to refer concerns to an appropriately trained person, e.g. the DSL or deputy DSL (DDSL) within their school.
- Ensuring pupils are taught how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil who has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- Ensuring that headteachers and any new staff and volunteers within the Trust are only appointed once all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

Statutory guidance

- DfE Keeping children safe in education
- DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Home Office 'Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales'
- DfE 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE 'Academy Trust handbook 2025'
- HM Government 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'
- DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (2026)
- DfE Allergy safety in schools, July 2026
- DfE Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school, September 2024

Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2026) 'Academy trusts: governance guide'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2025) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2025) 'Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2024) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multiagency guidance'

Policies and documents

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school-level and Trust-wide policies:

- Safeguarding Allegations and concerns about Twynham Learning Workers Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Mobile Devices Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Carrying out their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in all schools within the MAT.
- Understanding their safeguarding duties and having regard to any statutory guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State.
- Taking strategic leadership responsibility for the Trust's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensuring the suitability of staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors, and proprietors.
- Making sure that all schools within the Trust have effective safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place that comply with their statutory obligations.
- Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted by the Trust Board, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are understood and followed by all staff.
- Having procedures in place to monitor the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures regularly.
- Ensuring that all Trustees and local school governors (Ambassadors) receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and that this training is updated regularly thereafter.
- Commissioning independent safeguarding audits of each school and the Trust, every 3 years.
- Receiving regular reports from the CEO on safeguarding to the Trust Board delegating operational responsibilities.
- Ensuring that every school within the Trust complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guaranteeing that each school within the Trust contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- Confirming that the Trust's safeguarding arrangements consider the procedures and practices of the relevant LAs as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Understanding the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment for each school within the Trust and ensuring these are reflected in the Trust's policies and procedures.
- Complying with its obligations under section 14B of the Children Act 2004 to supply the local safeguarding arrangements with information to fulfil its functions.
- Ensuring that all staff, regardless of their role or level of direct contact with children, read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ensuring that mechanisms are in place to assist staff in schools to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding children.
- Ensuring schools within the Trust appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description.
- Ensuring schools within the Trust appoint one or more DDSLs to provide support to the DSL and ensuring that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL and that the role is explicit in their job description(s).
- Ensuring that each school in the Trust has robust arrangements in place to provide continuity of safeguarding responsibilities whenever the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances. Arrangements will ensure safeguarding concerns continue to be received, monitored, and acted upon without delay and may include a confidential shared safeguarding mailbox or equivalent system. Any DDSL undertaking the functions of the DSL will be trained to the same standard as the DSL.
- Ensuring each school within the Trust facilitates a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern within a school that is part of the Trust, ensuring there are procedures in place to take the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensuring systems are in place within the Trust for pupils to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.

- Ensuring that procedures are in place within the Trust so that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensuring that a member of the Trust Board is nominated to liaise with the school's LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the headteacher, another Trustee or School Ambassador.
- Ensuring all relevant persons are aware of the Trust's safeguarding arrangements, including the Trust Board itself, and each school's DSL, DDSL(s) and SLT.
- Making sure that pupils in each school are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhering to statutory responsibilities by ensuring pre-employment checks are conducted on all staff within the Trust who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensuring that staff within the Trust are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensuring each school within the Trust has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guaranteeing that volunteers within the Trust are appropriately supervised.
- Ensuring that volunteers within the Trust are appropriately supervised and that all required safer recruitment and vetting checks are completed, including an enhanced DBS check with the children's barred list information for any volunteer engaging in regulated activity.
- Making sure that at least one person on any appointment panel within the Trust has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensuring that all staff within the Trust receive safeguarding and child protection training updates, e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually.
- Ensuring each school within the Trust takes overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and seek assurance that the filtering and monitoring standards for schools are being met
- Certifying that there are procedures in place within the Trust to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirming that there are procedures in place within the Trust to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guaranteeing that there are procedures in place within the Trust to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensuring that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff within the Trust.
- Ensuring that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child and teenage relationship abuse within the Trust.
- Guaranteeing that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback within the Trust.
- Establishing an early help procedure and ensure all staff within the Trust understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Appointing a designated teacher for LAC within each school to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensuring that the designated teacher for LAC within each school works with the virtual school head(s) (VSH) to discuss how the pupil premium funding can best be used to support LAC.
- Introducing mechanisms to assist staff within the Trust in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.

- Making sure that staff members within the Trust have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly about the pupil's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Putting in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensuring the Trust has put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who go missing from a school within the Trust, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and preventing the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensuring that all members of the Trust Board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Creating a culture within the Trust where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that robust safeguarding records are kept in each school and the effectiveness of recordkeeping is monitored.
- Acting in accordance with their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 the Equality Act 2010, and the Trust's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensuring each school within the Trust has appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe where school facilities or premises are hired or rented out to organisations or individuals and, where services or activities are provided separately by another body, seek assurance that the body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place and that individuals working with children have appropriate DBS checks.
- Ensuring each school within the Trust has safeguarding requirements that 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.
- Ensuring each school within the Trust has robust health and safety and emergency evacuation procedures.

All staff within the Trust and its schools have a responsibility to:

- Consider always, what is in the best interests of the pupils in the Trust.
- Maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Provide safe environments in which pupils can learn.
- Be prepared to identify pupils who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the Trust's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and DDSL(s) within the relevant school.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training, during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, as required, and at least annually.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to CSCS, as well as for making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Make a referral to CSCS and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL within the relevant school.
- Be aware of and understand the Trust's procedure to follow in the event that a pupil confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.

- Speak to their school's DSL or DDSL(s) if they are unsure about how to manage safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put pupils at risk of harm.
- Be aware of behaviours linked to issues such as drug-taking, alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, and sharing indecent images, and other signs that pupils may be at risk of harm.

See Local child protection procedures for Headteacher and DSL responsibilities.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Where a school within the Trust provides education or childcare for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including children in school-based nursery provision and Reception classes, the school will comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in Section 3 of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage for group and school-based providers, alongside the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

The Trust recognises the particular vulnerability of younger children, who may be less able to recognise, understand or communicate that they are being harmed. Staff working with children in the EYFS will therefore remain particularly alert to changes in behaviour, presentation, communication, physical appearance and relationships which may indicate a safeguarding or welfare concern.

All staff working with children aged 0-5 years in school-based nurseries and in Reception must read Section 3 of the EYFS statutory framework alongside KCSIE 2026.

Each school providing EYFS provision will ensure that:

- appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard children and promote their welfare, including clear procedures for responding to concerns about a child and allegations or concerns about adults working with children
- staff working within the EYFS are suitable to fulfil their roles and that all required safer recruitment, suitability and vetting checks are completed in accordance with statutory requirements
- safeguarding training for practitioners is appropriate to their role, regularly updated and enables staff to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding concerns effectively
- appropriate arrangements are in place regarding the use of mobile phones, cameras, smart devices and other electronic equipment to protect children from inappropriate photography, recording and online harm
- unexplained or prolonged absences are followed up promptly and safeguarding concerns arising from patterns of absence are referred to the DSL
- sufficient emergency contact information is held for every child and is kept up to date
- children are appropriately supervised and safe arrangements are maintained for eating, drinking, weaning and, where applicable, sleeping
- staff understand individual children's medical needs, allergies and dietary requirements and appropriate action is taken to minimise foreseeable risks
- appropriate paediatric first-aid arrangements are maintained in accordance with the EYFS statutory framework
- whistleblowing arrangements are understood by staff, volunteers, students and apprentices and concerns about safeguarding practice can be raised without fear of reprisal
- safeguarding arrangements take account of each child's age, developmental stage, communication needs, and individual circumstances, including children with SEND or other additional needs.

The DSL will work closely with the EYFS lead and relevant staff to ensure that safeguarding practice within Early Years provision remains compliant with the current EYFS statutory framework and that any safeguarding concerns are responded to in accordance with this policy and local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Multi-agency working

The Trust contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The Trust is aware of, and will follow, the local safeguarding arrangements.

The schools within the Trust will be fully engaged, involved, and included in the child-centred approach towards local safeguarding arrangements. Once the Trust and its schools are named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. Schools within the Trust will act in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding arrangements.

The Trust is committed to anti-discriminatory and anti-racist safeguarding practice. Staff will consider how race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sex, gender, sexuality, language, poverty and other factors may influence a child's experiences, access to support and engagement with services. Staff will actively challenge discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping and will work collaboratively with partner agencies to ensure children receive equitable support and protection.

Schools within the Trust will support Family Group Decision Making arrangements where appropriate and will cooperate with local authority-led family network approaches aimed at identifying safe and sustainable support for children within their wider family and support networks.

The Trust will allow CSCS from the host LA and, where appropriate, the placing LA, access to pupils to enable them to undertake or consider assessments under sections 17 or 47 of the Children Act 1989.

The Trust will also be mindful of the importance of inter-agency working in identifying and preventing CSE, CCE and other forms of extra-familial harm.

The Trust will reflect the DfE's expectations to secure strong multi-agency working by:

- Collaborating with services to achieve shared goals and share information.
- Learning from evidence and sharing perspective to evaluate provision.
- Prioritising and sharing resources depending on pupils' needs.
- Understanding its role within the local safeguarding arrangements.
- Mutually and constructively challenging other's assumptions in a respectful manner

Information sharing

The Trust recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet pupils' needs and identify any need for early help.

Considering the above, staff within the Trust will be aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes – data protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the pupil being placed at risk of harm.

Staff members will be made aware that there may be legal or statutory requirements to share information for safeguarding purposes when requested by relevant agencies.

Staff members within the Trust and its schools will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of pupils. If school staff members are in doubt about sharing information, they will speak to their school's DSL or DDSL(s).

Where decisions are made about sharing or withholding information, these will be based on consideration of the risks to the pupil and, where appropriate, the rationale for decisions will be recorded.

When deciding what safeguarding information to share, staff will consider the relevance of the information to the current safeguarding risk, what it is necessary for the receiving setting, agency or practitioner to know, and whether the information is clearly presented and appropriately contextualised. Professional judgement will be used to ensure that information shared is focused, necessary and proportionate. Information that is not necessary for safeguarding purposes may be summarised or omitted; however, information will not be omitted where it may be relevant to understanding, assessing or managing safeguarding risk. Decisions about sharing or withholding information, and the rationale for those decisions, will be appropriately recorded.

Support before statutory intervention

The Trust recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise before a child is born. Where concerns exist in relation to an unborn child, schools will work with safeguarding partners and relevant agencies to contribute to assessment, planning and support arrangements designed to safeguard the child following birth.

Any pupil may benefit from support before statutory intervention; however, staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for community-based early help or family help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have a mental health need.
- Are young carers.
- Are pregnant or are a parent themselves.
- Have exhibited early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviours.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Have been repeatedly removed from the classroom.
- Have experienced multiple suspensions.
- Are on a part-time timetable.
- Are at risk of being permanently excluded or are in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- Are at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised into terrorism.
- Have family members in custody or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Are misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Are at risk of honour or faith-based abuse, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.

Schools within the Trust will not limit support to pupils affected by the above and will be mindful of a variety of additional circumstances in which pupils may benefit from community-based early help or family help.

Staff will be mindful of all signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and use their professional curiosity to raise concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will take the lead where family help or community-based early help is appropriate. This includes liaising with other agencies and arranging a multi-agency family help assessment where appropriate, following local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals during a community-based early help or family help assessment and, in some circumstances, may act as the Lead Practitioner, where appropriate and in accordance with local arrangements. All cases will be reviewed regularly and consideration given to referral to CSCS where the child's circumstances do not improve or where the level of risk increases.

Staff will be made familiar with the local thresholds for community-based early help, family help, Section 17 (Children in Need) and Section 47 (Child Protection) and will follow local safeguarding partnership procedures when making referrals.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All staff working within the Trust will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and will understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others and online. Staff will also be aware that pupils can be affected by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse.

All staff working within the Trust will recognise that abuse or neglect of a child may occur through the infliction of harm or through the failure to act to prevent harm. The school will understand that harm can include ill treatment that is not physical in nature, as well as the psychological impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others.

All staff working within the Trust will pay particular attention to the effects of domestic abuse on children, recognising that harm may arise not only when children are directly involved, but also when they see, hear, or otherwise experience its consequences. All necessary steps will be taken to identify and respond appropriately to such concerns in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils.

All staff will be aware that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL.

All staff, especially schools' DSLs and deputy DSLs, will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms).

These harms include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual abuse, including harassment and exploitation.
- Domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking.
- Criminal exploitation, including financial exploitation.
- Serious youth violence.
- County lines.
- Radicalisation.

All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a pupil being identified as at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure.

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

Staff will also understand that child-on-child abuse can occur online and can take the form of:

- Abusive, harassing, misogynistic, or misandrist messages.
- The non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, particularly within group chats.

- Sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not wish to receive such content.

Specific safeguarding issues

There are certain specific safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm – staff will be made aware of these issues.

Appendix A of this policy sets out details about specific safeguarding issues that pupils may experience and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues.

Child-on-child abuse

For the purposes of this policy, **“child-on-child abuse”** is defined as abuse between children.

The Trust has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse, as confirmed in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy’s statement of intent.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online.

All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring.

All staff will speak to their school’s DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up.”

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Serious physical assault and harm, or threat of harm with a weapon – 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 harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their private areas to obtain sexual gratification.
- Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group – this may also include an online element.

The Trust is aware that some children may be particularly vulnerable and have an increased risk of abuse. Each school within the Trust will recognise that children with SEND or certain health conditions are three times more likely to be abused by their peers, can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child-on-child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The school will consider extra pastoral support for those children.

The Trust understands that all pupils have the right to be safeguarded from harm regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality or disability and will ensure that all schools within the Trust give special consideration to, amongst others, children who:

- Have SEND.
- Are vulnerable to being bullied.
- Are looked after or living in unsupportive home situations.

DSLs working in schools within the Trust will ensure they appropriately assess all instances of child-on child abuse, including in cases of image-based abuse, to help determine whether the alleged perpetrator(s) is under the age of 18 or is an adult posing as a child. The DSL will immediately refer the case if it is found that a so-called child-on-child abuse incident involves an adult, e.g. where an adult poses as a child online to groom a child or young person.

All staff will be clear as to the Trust's policy and school level procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

The Trust recognises that harmful behaviours exist on a continuum and will respond proportionately, considering the age, developmental stage, intent, frequency, and seriousness of the behaviour, as well as the needs of all children involved.

Online safety and personal electronic devices

The Trust will ensure that schools within the Trust adhere to the Online Safety Policy at all times.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils within the Trust's schools will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training, all staff within the Trust will be made aware of:

- Pupil attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a pupil's online activity.

The Trust will ensure that staff training in online safety in each of its schools covers the four categories of risk as outlined in KCSIE:

- Content - Staff will be trained to understand the risks associated with being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material. This will include, but not be limited to, content relating to pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories.
- Contact - Training will address the risks of harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this. This will include peer-to-peer pressure, exposure to commercial advertising, and the threat posed by adults impersonating children or young people with the intention of grooming or exploiting them for sexual, criminal, financial, or other purposes.
- Conduct - Staff will be made aware of how certain online behaviours may increase the likelihood of harm or result in actual harm. This will encompass activities such as making, sending, or receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and instances of online bullying.
- Commerce - The programme will also cover risks related to online commerce. These will include dangers such as online gambling, exposure to inappropriate advertising, phishing attempts, and other types of financial scams. The Trust will ensure that each of its schools have appropriate filtering systems in place

on school devices and school networks to prevent children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with the filtering and monitoring standards published by the DfE.

The Trust recognises the emerging safeguarding risks associated with generative artificial intelligence (AI), including deepfake imagery, nudification apps, misinformation, impersonation, grooming, fraud, image-based abuse and harmful or misleading content. Staff will receive appropriate training to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns involving AI technologies.

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

Further information regarding the Trust's approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

Communicating with parents

As part of the usual communication with parents, the Trust will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems their child's school uses to filter and monitor internet use.

Schools will be expected to make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

Reviewing online safety

All schools within the Trust will conduct an annual review of their approach to online safety that considers and reflects the risks faced by pupils.

As part of this review, schools will undertake an annual online safety risk assessment which considers emerging technologies, generative AI, local safeguarding issues, patterns identified through filtering and monitoring systems, and any incidents that have occurred within the school community.

Schools within the Trust will also review the effectiveness of its filtering and monitoring systems at least annually. This review will be led by the member of the SLT responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and ICT support where appropriate. The review will include checks that filtering and monitoring systems are operating effectively on all internet-connected devices in relevant locations, and a written record of the review will be maintained

Mobile Devices Policy

The Trust will ensure that pupils do not have access to mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime, except where an exemption applies. The Trust's approach to mobile phones and smart technology will be set out in the Mobile Devices Policy and will take account of the safeguarding risks associated with pupils having unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile networks.

Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes

The Trust will ensure that staff are aware to treat the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as a safeguarding concern, including where these images are generated by AI.

Staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the pupil, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with instances of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to pupils depicted in the images, and how and when to report instances of this behaviour.

Staff will be aware that making or sharing imagery depicting nudes or semi-nudes of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, staff will ensure that pupils are not unnecessarily criminalised.

Staff will also be made aware that the laws imposed on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes applies to digitally manipulated and AI-generated imagery.

The Trust's full response to incidents of consensual and non-consensual making or sharing nudes or semi nudes can be found in the Making or Sharing of Nude or Semi-nude Images Policy, including the appropriate reporting routes for both staff and pupils.

Appropriate physical contact with pupils

The Trust will not operate a 'no contact' policy. The Trust will also not agree to any request from parents or staff that would prevent the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions where these may be necessary and lawful. A 'no contact' approach could leave staff unable to intervene appropriately to safeguard pupils and others.

Physical intervention and reasonable force may be used in limited circumstances and will be managed in line with the Physical Intervention Policy.

The Trust will adopt sensible policies and practices which will allow and support staff to make appropriate physical contact with pupils where this is necessary, proportionate, and in the best interests of the child. There will be circumstances in which physical contact will be appropriate and will not give rise to concerns about the use of reasonable force or restrictive interventions.

Examples of circumstances where physical contact will generally be appropriate include:

- Providing first aid.
- Guiding or escorting pupils, e.g. holding the hand of a younger pupil when moving around the school or on a school trip, supporting a pupil to move to a space they have chosen to access in order to self-regulate, or assisting pupils to move safely.
- Comforting a distressed pupil.
- Congratulating or praising a pupil, e.g. a handshake or a brief pat on the back.
- Demonstrating how to use a musical instrument.
- Demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching.

When deciding whether physical contact will be appropriate in a particular situation, staff will use their professional judgement and will have regard to:

- This policy and any other relevant policy.
- The context and circumstances, including whether other adults are present.
- The individual pupil's age and level of understanding.
- Any other relevant factors, including, but not limited to:
 - Whether the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities.
 - Whether alternative strategies that do not involve physical contact could be used.

Context of safeguarding incidents

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of schools within the Trust and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly DSLs and DDSL(s), will always consider the context of safeguarding incidents. Assessment of pupils' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The schools within the Trust will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to CSCS.

Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm

Each school within the Trust recognises that some groups of pupils can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline, and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse, neglect and exploitation. Each school will ensure that safeguarding concerns involving these pupils are responded to appropriately, taking account of their individual needs and circumstances.

Pupils who need social workers

Pupils may need social workers due to abuse, neglect, exploitation or complex family circumstances. Their experiences of adversity and trauma may leave them vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage, including barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

As a matter of routine, the DSL within each school will hold and use information from their LA about whether a pupil has a social worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where a pupil needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare, e.g. considering the provision pastoral or academic support.

The Trust recognises the strategic role of the Virtual School Head in promoting the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. Schools will work with the Virtual School Head and other relevant professionals, where appropriate, to support this group of pupils, recognising that regular attendance at school is an important protective factor in safeguarding children.

Children who are absent from education

The Trust recognises that pupils who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeated occasions may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, CCE and CSE, including county lines.

The Trust will respond to concerns relating to attendance in accordance with its Attendance and Absence Policy and Children Missing Education Policy, and will work with CSCS and other agencies where absence gives rise to safeguarding concerns.

Home-educated children

Whilst many home educated children receive suitable education, the Trust recognises that elective home education (EHE) can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them.

In line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, each school within the Trust will ensure it informs their LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a pupil is taken off roll.

Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a pupil from a school within the Trust for EHE, the school, in collaboration with the Trust, LA and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, where possible, before the final decision has been made, particularly if the pupil has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Pupils requiring mental health support

The Trust recognises that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This may include self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or suicide, or indicate that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals will make a diagnosis of a mental health condition; however, all staff will play an important role in promoting positive mental wellbeing, identifying pupils who may require support, ensuring there is early intervention and the referral concerns where appropriate.

Where support is required, the DSL or DDSL(s) will consider whether parents should be informed where doing so will not place the pupil at additional risk. Where safeguarding concerns are linked to a pupil's mental health or emotional wellbeing, the DSL or DDSL(s) will liaise with the school's senior mental health lead to ensure the pupil receives coordinated support.

A Trust-wide approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing will be maintained and schools within the Trust will make use of appropriate internal and external support services where required.

LAC and PLAC

Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. Previously LAC (PLAC), also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

The Board of Trustees will ensure that staff in the Trust have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe. This includes ensuring that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the pupil.

The DSL in each school will be provided with the necessary details of pupils' social workers and the VSH, and, for PLAC, personal advisers.

Further details of safeguarding procedures for LAC and PLAC are outlined in each school's LAC Policy.

Young carers

The Trust recognises that caring responsibilities may have a significant impact on a pupil's attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing.

The Trust will seek to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity and will work with pupils, families and external agencies to ensure that appropriate support is provided.

Pupils with SEND

When managing safeguarding in relation to pupils with SEND, staff will be aware that:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood, and injury, may relate to the pupil's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a pupil's indicators relate only to their disability.
- Pupils with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as peer isolation, bullying, and prejudice-based bullying without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers may make it more difficult for pupils to recognise, disclose, or report abuse.
- Pupils with SEND may not always recognise that what is happening to them is abuse.
- Pupils requiring intimate care or who are more isolated from others may be at increased risk.
- Pupils may be more dependent on adults for care.
- Pupils may have difficulty understanding the difference between fact and fiction online or understanding the consequences of their online behaviour.

When responding to safeguarding concerns involving pupils with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the SENCO and, where appropriate, parents and external agencies to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate support.

The Trust will also consider whether additional pastoral support or communication support is required.

Pupils who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual

The fact that a pupil is lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not, in itself, a risk factor for harm; however, the Trust recognises that these pupils, or those perceived to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual, may be more vulnerable to discriminatory bullying.

The Trust will take appropriate steps to prevent and respond to bullying and ensure that all pupils feel safe, respected, and supported.

Pupils who are questioning their gender

The Trust recognises that some pupils may question their gender and that they may have additional vulnerabilities, including mental health or psychosocial needs.

In considering any request or disclosure relating to gender questioning, schools will balance safeguarding responsibilities, legal obligations, parental engagement, and the rights, safety and wellbeing of all pupils who may be affected by any decision.

Schools within the Trust will take time to understand the individual circumstances of pupils who are questioning their gender and will respond on a case-by-case basis, acting in the best interests of the pupil and taking account of the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

Schools within the Trust will not initiate action relating to social transition. Where a request for support is received from a pupil or their parent, the school will respond in accordance with the latest DfE guidance, taking a cautious approach, involving the DSL and, except where doing so would place the pupil at risk of significant harm, working in partnership with parents.

Where a pupil discloses that they are questioning their gender or requests support in relation to social transition, staff will listen carefully and respond sensitively. Staff will not promise confidentiality and will explain that any information shared may need to be discussed with the DSL in order to safeguard and promote the pupil's welfare.

The Trust will maintain a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and will ensure that pupils who are questioning their gender receive appropriate safeguarding support and are able to raise concerns with Trusted members of staff.

All DSLs within the Trust will ensure that appropriate records are maintained of any requests relating to social transition, the factors considered, decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions. Records will be kept securely in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

Safeguarding requirements relating to school premises

The Trust will ensure that school premises provide a safe environment for all pupils and comply with the relevant statutory requirements relating to toilets, washing facilities and changing accommodation. Separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged eight years or over will be provided, except where a toilet facility is intended for use by one pupil at a time and can be secured from the inside. Suitable changing accommodation and showers, where required, will be provided separately for boys and girls aged 11 years or over.

Schools will ensure that the use of toilets, changing rooms and other facilities is managed in a way that safeguards the privacy, dignity and safety of all pupils. Where individual circumstances require additional arrangements, these will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the pupil's needs, safeguarding considerations, the rights and safety of other pupils and the school's statutory obligations.

Use of school premises for non-school activities

Where a school within the Trust hires or rents out school facilities or school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe, including seeking approval from the Trust Board, where required. The Trust will ensure that schools within the Trust refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where a school within the Trust provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply.

Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the Trust Board or delegated authority will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed.

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

Extracurricular activities and clubs

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the schools in the Trust to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local and Trust wide safeguarding arrangements.

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

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

Sport

The Trust recognises its responsibility to ensure that all pupils are able to participate in PE and sport safely and fairly. Schools will follow relevant guidance on the safe and fair operation of individual sports. Where, because of the nature of a sport and the age of the pupils, participation in single-sex groups is necessary to ensure pupils' safety, there will be no exceptions to those safety requirements. Schools may also provide single-sex sporting activities where this is necessary to ensure fair competition in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Where there are no safety concerns and a pupil makes a request concerning how they participate in PE or sport, the school will consider the individual circumstances in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026*, its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and its safeguarding duties, taking account of the best interests of the pupil, the impact on other pupils and the need to maintain a safe and fair environment for all.

Alternative provision

The Trust will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, the Trust will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff and will satisfy itself that the placement is meeting the pupil's needs.

Those responsible for the commissioning of alternative provision will be aware that pupils in alternative provision will often have complex needs – they will be mindful of the additional risk of harm that these pupils may be vulnerable to.

Schools within the Trust will obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment. This will include written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the school of any arrangements that may put the pupil at risk.

The Trust will continue to carry out safeguarding checks and conduct its own due diligence to ensure that the AP is appropriate for meeting each pupil's individual needs.

The Trust will ensure that the location of pupils placed at AP is always known and will maintain records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the pupil may attend.

AP placement reviews will take place at least half termly to ensure that pupils are regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets their needs.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement will be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

Work experience

The Trust will ensure that schools have the appropriate procedures to ensure that providers of work experience have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Where pupils are undertaking work experience at the Trust or one of the schools within the Trust, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the pupil is over the age of 16. The Trust will not allow someone on the barred list to engage in regulated activity with a pupil on a work experience placement.

Homestay exchange visits

School-arranged homestays in UK

Where schools within the Trust are arranging for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK in the home of a family to which the child is not related, the responsible adults are considered to be in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases, the school is the regulated activity provider; therefore, the Trust will ensure that schools within the Trust are aware of the need to obtain all the necessary information required, including a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information, to inform its assessment of the suitability of the responsible adults.

Where criminal record information is disclosed, schools will consider, alongside all other information, whether the adult is a suitable host. In addition to the responsible adults, schools will consider whether a DBS enhanced certificate should be obtained for anyone else aged over 16 in the household.

School-arranged homestays abroad

The Trust will ensure that schools within the Trust are aware of their responsibility to liaise with partner schools to discuss and agree the arrangements in place for the visit. Schools within the Trust will be expected to consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to ascertain what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK.

Each school will use its professional judgement to assess whether the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard every child involved in the exchange. Pupils will be provided with emergency contact details to use where an emergency occurs, or a situation arises that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Privately arranged homestays

Where a parent or pupil arranges their own homestay, this is a private arrangement, and the individual Trust school is not the regulated activity provider.

Private fostering

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more for a child aged under 16, or under 18 for a child with SEND, this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act 1989. Where the Trust becomes aware of a pupil being privately fostered, it will notify the LA as soon as possible to allow the LA to conduct any necessary checks.

Reporting and responding to concerns about pupils

Reporting concerns

Staff across the Trust will maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned. Staff will always act in the best interests of a pupil when they are concerned about their welfare.

Staff will be aware that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Where there is any doubt about sharing information, staff will seek advice from the DSL or DDSL(s). Concerns about sharing information must not prevent the timely sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

If a member of staff has any concern about a pupil's welfare, or a pupil reports a safeguarding concern about themselves or another pupil, the member of staff will act immediately by reporting the concern to their school's DSL or DDSL(s) in line with the Trust's safeguarding procedures.

Staff will not assume that a colleague or another professional will take action or share information that may be critical to keeping a pupil safe. Staff will recognise that early information sharing is essential to the effective identification, assessment, and provision of appropriate support.

Where the school's DSL is unavailable, staff will report the concern to a DDSL(s). In exceptional circumstances, where neither the DSL nor DDSL(s) are immediately available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff will seek advice from a member of the SLT and/or the relevant LA children's social care, as appropriate. Any action taken in these circumstances will be shared with the DSL or DDSL(s) as soon as possible.

Determining the appropriate response

Following a report, the DSL or DDSL(s) will consider the information provided, the pupil's level of need, any known history and the local safeguarding threshold guidance before determining the most appropriate course of action.

This may include:

- Providing or coordinating appropriate support within the school through pastoral or wellbeing processes, including considering, where it is safe and appropriate to do so, whether parents should be informed to support the pupil's wellbeing.
- Undertaking or contributing to an early help or family help assessment.
- Making a referral to CSCS or other statutory services where a pupil may be in need, is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Where a community-based early help or family help assessment is undertaken, the DSL will normally coordinate the school's involvement with partner agencies. Staff will contribute to assessments, planning, and review meetings as required. The Trust will keep all safeguarding cases under regular review and will request additional intervention or make further referrals where a pupil's circumstances do not improve or where risks increase.

Staff will be expected to familiarise themselves with the DfE's guidance on information sharing to support decision-making where information needs to be shared to safeguard children.

Referrals and multi-agency working

Where a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, or is in immediate danger, a referral will be made immediately to the relevant LA children's social care and/or the police, as appropriate. Referrals will follow the procedures of the relevant local safeguarding partnership for the school concerned. Where a criminal offence is suspected, including incidents of sexual violence, the police will be informed without delay.

The Trust and its schools will follow the reporting and referral process set out in KCSIE and the procedures of the relevant local safeguarding partnership.

DSLs will be familiar with the safeguarding referral arrangements that apply within their LA area and will provide advice and support to staff as required. Information will be shared with external agencies in accordance with data protection legislation, information sharing guidance and the Trust's confidentiality and records management procedures.

Where a school makes a referral to CSCS, the DSL will expect confirmation of the LA's decision within one working day and will follow up if this is not received.

Where CSCS decides to undertake a statutory assessment, the DSL or DDSL(s) will work proactively with partner agencies and relevant staff to support the assessment process.

If concerns remain following a referral or the pupil's circumstances do not improve, the DSL will escalate concerns or seek reconsideration in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

DSLs will maintain effective working relationships with CSCS, the police, and other relevant agencies to promote pupils' welfare while ensuring that the actions of the school do not compromise any ongoing investigation.

The Trust and its schools will not wait for the outcome of a statutory assessment or criminal investigation before taking appropriate action to safeguard and support a pupil. Where statutory intervention is not required, appropriate support will continue to be considered through early help, family help, pastoral support or other suitable interventions.

Supporting pupils and recording concerns

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the Trust will ensure that the wishes and feelings of the pupil are considered in decisions affecting them, in accordance with their age and understanding. Pupils will be given opportunities to express their views and will be listened to, taken seriously, and supported.

Discussions with parents will take place where appropriate and where doing so will not place the pupil or others at increased risk of harm. The school will work in partnership with parents and relevant agencies wherever this is in the pupil's best interests.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions, and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded promptly by the DSL or DDSL(s) and maintained securely in accordance with the Trust's records management procedures.

Information sharing and transfer of child protection files

Where a pupil leaves a school within the Trust, including through an in-year transfer, the DSL will ensure that the pupil's child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible and within five days for an in-year transfer, or within the first five days of the start of a new term. The child protection file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, using secure arrangements, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

The transferring school will provide a clear, structured safeguarding summary identifying current safeguarding concerns, relevant context and any ongoing support needs, clearly distinguishing current concerns from historic information. The receiving school will ensure that the safeguarding information is reviewed promptly by an appropriately trained member of staff so that key risks and needs are understood and appropriate action and

support can be put in place. Where information received is unclear or incomplete, clarification will be sought from the previous setting. The DSL will also consider whether additional safeguarding information should be shared with the receiving school in advance of the pupil's transfer where this is necessary to support effective risk assessment, safeguarding or continuity of support (p.183 KCSIE 2026).

Concerns about Trust safeguarding practices

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices at the Trust will be raised with the SLT of the school, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures will be followed, as outlined in the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their school's SLT, they should access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

Safeguarding concerns and of abuse against staff

All allegations against school staff, Trust staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors will be managed in line with the relevant Safeguarding Allegations and concerns about Twynham Learning Workers Policy and the procedures laid out by the individual school at which the staff members work or have worked. The Trust will ensure its schools are equipped to manage all allegations against staff, including those who are not employees of schools within the Trust, and that the affected schools liaise with the relevant parties.

Trainee Teachers

Safeguarding concerns or allegations relating to trainee teachers will be managed in accordance with the same procedures that apply to other adults working in or on behalf of the school. Where a trainee teacher is not directly employed by the Trust or school, the school will liaise with the relevant initial teacher training provider, agency or other employing organisation. The school will remain responsible for gathering the facts and managing the safeguarding process, in liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate, while the training provider, agency or employer will be responsible for considering any employment, disciplinary or training action. The school and relevant provider or employer will work together and share relevant information to ensure that safeguarding concerns are managed effectively and without delay.

Supply teachers

Supply teachers, whilst not employed by a school, are under the school's supervision, direction and control. The school, in liaison with the Trust, are still responsible for ensuring allegations are dealt with appropriately. This will involve discussing the actions to be taken with the supply agency whilst an investigation is carried out.

When managing allegations against staff, the Trust will recognise the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and allegations that do not, also known as "low-level concerns."

Allegations that meet the harms threshold include instances where staff have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Committed or possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they 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.

Low-level concerns will be managed in line with the affected school's Reporting Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy. Communication and confidentiality

When recording, holding, using and sharing information, the DSL at each school within the Trust will ensure that they:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within their school and the Trust, and with other schools on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, in particular the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale of those decisions. This will include instances where referrals were and were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program.

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with the data protection policies of the Trust and individual schools within the Trust.

Where there is an allegation or incident of sexual abuse or sexual violence, the victim is entitled to anonymity by law; therefore, the Trust and affected schools will consult its relevant policies and agree on what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. Where a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the Trust and its schools will do all it can to protect the anonymity of the pupils involved in the case.

Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for its progression and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis. During the disclosure of a concern by a pupil, staff members will not promise the pupil confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why.

Where it is in the public interest, and protects pupils from harm, information can be lawfully shared without the victim's consent, e.g. if doing so would assist the prevention, detection, or prosecution of a serious crime. Before doing so, the DSL of the affected school will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. Where a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it is done so carefully with the reasons for the referral explained to the victim and specialist support offered.

Depending on the nature of a concern, the DSL of the affected school will discuss the concern with the parents of the pupils involved. Discussions with parents will not take place where they could potentially put a pupil at risk of harm. External agencies will be invited to these discussions where necessary.

Where confidentiality or anonymity has been breached, the Trust will ensure the appropriate disciplinary procedures are implemented as necessary and will analyse how damage can be minimised, and future breaches be prevented.

Safer recruitment

The Trust's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members and volunteers engaged in regulated activity.

The Trust will determine whether a role constitutes regulated activity in accordance with current legislation and DfE guidance, including the DBS Workforce Guides. This will include staff, volunteers, and third-party personnel engaged in regulated activity. Where a role constitutes regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information will be obtained before the individual begins work.

Volunteers

From 1 September 2026, in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended by the Crime and Policing Act 2026, the Trust will recognise that the supervision exemption from regulated activity no longer applies.

Any person volunteering in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children will be regarded as engaging in regulated activity where the activity is carried out frequently or on more than three days in any 30-day period, or overnight. This applies whether or not the volunteer is supervised by a member of staff or another person who is themselves engaging in regulated activity.

Before permitting a volunteer to undertake regulated activity, the Trust or school will obtain an enhanced DBS check including children's barred list information.

Where an individual meets the period condition (more than 3 days in a 30-day period) by volunteering at multiple settings (within and beyond the Trust), the school will work with the other settings to decide who should apply for the enhanced DBS check with barred list information and that information will then be supplied by the individual to each setting.

Volunteers not in regulated activity

Each school in the Trust must undertake a written risk assessment of any individual volunteering in their school but not in regulated activity. Each school should refer to the aspects identified in KCSIE 2026 (para. 386) when completing the written risk assessment.

Existing volunteers in regulated activity

Where a school in the Trust already has an existing volunteer who will now be in regulated activity from 1 September 2026, they must check their children's barred list status by obtaining an enhanced DBS with children's barred list information.

The DfE's [DBS Workforce Guides](#) will be consulted when determining whether a position fits the child workforce criteria.

The Trust Board will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective Trust employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK. This responsibility may be delegated by the Trust Board as required.

The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be conducted for all Trustees and local governors (Ambassadors), volunteers, and contractors within the Trust.

The Chair of Trustees will undertake a suitability check by the DfE and an enhanced DBS check that will be conducted regardless of checks previously performed by other organisations or how recently these took place.

Referral to the DBS

The Trust will refer an individual to the DBS where the legal duty to do so is met, including where they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a pupil and have been removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not resigned, retired or otherwise left their role.

Single central record (SCR)

The Trust will maintain a SCR detailing the checks conducted in each academy within the MAT.

The information contained within the SCR will be recorded in such a way that that allows for details for each individual academy to be provided separately, and without delay, to all who need to see it, including Ofsted.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check

- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK
- Any prohibition, direction, disqualification or suitability checks required by current legislation, regulation and DfE guidance.

The Trust will ensure that schools within the Trust have appropriate procedures in place for ensuring that the necessary checks have been conducted by the employment business supplying any members of staff for agency and third-party supply staff, and that written confirmation has been received confirming this. This will amount to all the same checks the school would perform on any individual working in the school or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery, and the date that confirmation was received.

The SCR will also record:

- Details of the appropriate checks undertaken for volunteers, including an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information where the volunteer is engaging in regulated activity
- Where a volunteer is not engaging in regulated activity, the Trust or school's determination of the appropriate safeguarding and vetting arrangements made, having regard to the nature, frequency, and circumstances of the volunteer's role.
- Written confirmation that supply agencies have completed all relevant checks.
- Any other information that the Trust or its schools deem relevant to keep children safe.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the Trust or any of its schools.

Training

The Trust will ensure that staff working in each of its schools undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be updated whenever there is a change in legislation.

The induction training will cover:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The Staff Code of Conduct.
- Part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE)
- The Behaviour Policy.
- The safeguarding response to children who are absent from education.
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training – which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs.

All staff members will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually. Training will cover, at a minimum:

- The issues surrounding sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Contextual safeguarding.
- How to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- CCE, CSE, modern slavery and trafficking, including where a referral to National Referral Mechanism may be appropriate.
- Updated online safety training.

Staff will receive opportunities to contribute towards and inform the safeguarding arrangements in the school.

The DSL and deputy DSLs will undergo training at least every two years and will additionally undertake regular updates to maintain knowledge and skills in line with national and local developments.

This will include training to understand:

- The assessment process for providing community-based early help, family help, and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and CSCS referral arrangements. How LAs conduct child protection case conferences and a child protection review conference, to enable the DSL to attend and contribute to these effectively when required.
- The importance of providing information and support to CSCS.
- The lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have.
- How to be alert to the specific needs of children in need, pupils with SEND and/or relevant health conditions, and young carers.
- The importance of internal and external information sharing.
- The Prevent duty.
- The risks associated with online safety, including the additional risks faced online by pupils with SEND

Appendix A Specific safeguarding issues

The Trust recognises that many of the safeguarding issues described in this appendix may be facilitated by technology or occur wholly online. Staff will remain alert to online indicators of abuse, exploitation, and harm and respond in accordance with this policy.

Domestic abuse

For the purposes of this policy, and in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, **“domestic abuse”** is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person (including conduct directed at someone else, e.g. the person’s child) where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. **“Abusive behaviour”** includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse. **“Personally connected”** includes people who:

- Are, have been, or have agreed to be married to each other.
- Are, have been, or have agreed to be in a civil partnership with each other.
- Are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- Each have, or had, a parental relationship towards the same child.
- Are relatives.

Staff will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Operation Encompass

In accordance with the statutory Operation Encompass arrangements, the DSL or appropriately trained DDSL(s) in each school will receive and review notifications relating to pupils who may be victims of domestic abuse, including where the child was not physically present at the incident. The school will ensure that appropriate and timely safeguarding, pastoral and wellbeing support is considered for the child. Information received will be treated confidentially, stored securely and shared only with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

Operation Encompass notifications do not replace existing safeguarding procedures or referrals to children’s social care. Where information received gives rise to concerns about a child’s welfare or safety, the DSL will take appropriate safeguarding action in accordance with this policy and local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Homelessness

The DSL and DDSL(s) in each of the Trust’s schools will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt.
- Rent arrears.
- Domestic abuse.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Any mention of a family moving home because “they have to.”

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSCS where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16- and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family-based and referrals to CSCS will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

Temporary accommodation notification duty

Where a child and their family are placed in temporary accommodation, schools within the Trust will recognise that changes in accommodation, particularly placements outside the child's home local authority area, may increase vulnerability and disrupt education, health services and existing safeguarding support.

Where the school receives a notification that a pupil has been placed in temporary accommodation, the DSL will ensure that relevant safeguarding information is considered promptly and that appropriate liaison takes place with the local authority and other agencies involved with the child and family. The school will consider any impact on the pupil's attendance, wellbeing, education and existing support arrangements and will share relevant safeguarding information with partner agencies where appropriate.

The Trust recognises that the statutory notification duty sits primarily with the local authority. However, the Trust recognises that schools within the Trust have a responsibility in acting on information and ensuring continuity of safeguarding and support.

Children absent from education

A child who is absent from school can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, CSE and CCE, particularly county lines. The Trust will ensure that its schools respond to children persistently being absent from education and will support schools in identifying such abuse and help prevent the risk of pupils becoming absent from education in the future.

Staff will monitor pupils that are absent from the school, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods, and report them to the DSL following normal safeguarding procedures, in accordance with the Children Missing from Education Policy.

Schools within the Trust will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Schools within the Trust will follow the DfE's guidance on improving attendance where there is a need to work with children's services due to school absences indicating safeguarding concerns.

Admissions register

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Child abduction and community safety incidents

For the purposes of this policy, "**child abduction**" is defined as the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim, and strangers.

All staff will be alert to community safety incidents taking place in the vicinity of the school that may raise concerns regarding child abduction, e.g. people loitering nearby or unknown adults conversing with pupils.

Schools within the Trust will provide pupils with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe outdoors.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

For the purposes of this policy, "**child criminal exploitation**" is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator

- Through violence or the threat of violence

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

All staff within the Trust's schools will recognise that pupils involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. Schools will also recognise that pupils of any gender are at risk of CCE.

School staff will be aware of the indicators that a pupil is the victim of CCE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly becoming absent from school or education or not taking part.

County lines

For the purposes of this policy, "**county lines**" refers to gangs and organised criminal networks exploiting children to move, store or sell drugs and money into one or more areas, locally and/or across the UK.

As well as the general indicators for CCE, school staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as 'plugging,' where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owing a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Staff will be made aware of pupils with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, county lines activity will immediately report all concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will consider referral to the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis and consider involving local services and providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Cyber-crime

For the purposes of this policy, "cyber-crime" is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. This includes 'cyber-enabled' crimes, i.e. crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale

and at speed online, and 'cyber-dependent' crimes, i.e. crimes that can be committed only by using a computer. Crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as 'hacking.'
- Denial of Service attacks, known as 'booting.'
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or 'malware,' e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence. Such activity may constitute an offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSL referring pupils to the National Crime Agency's Cyber Choices programme.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

For the purposes of this policy, **"child sexual exploitation"** is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence

School staff will be able to recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the pupil's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. Schools will recognise that CSE can affect any pupil who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes pupils aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. Staff will also recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

School staff will be aware of the key indicators that a pupil is the victim of CSE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly becoming absent from school or education or not taking part.
- Having older partners.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Becoming pregnant.

All concerns related to CSE will be managed in line with the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy.

Where CSE, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff will discuss the case with the DSL. If after discussion a concern remains, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered, including referral to the LA. The LA and all other necessary authorities will then manage the matter to conclusion. The school will cooperate as needed.

Modern slavery

For the purposes of this policy, **"modern slavery"** encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff within the Trust will be aware of and alert to the signs that a pupil may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism.

FGM

For the purposes of this policy, “**FGM**” is defined as all procedures involving the 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.

All Trust staff will be alert to the possibility of a pupil being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to share this information with CSCS and/or the police. The school’s procedures relating to managing cases of FGM and protecting pupils will reflect multi-agency working arrangements.

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a pupil under the age of 18. Teachers failing to report such cases may face disciplinary action. Teachers will not examine pupils, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must personally report to the police where an act of FGM appears to have been conducted. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve CSCS as appropriate. **NB:** This does not apply to any suspected or at-risk cases, nor if the individual is over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

All Trust staff will be aware of the indicators that pupils may be at risk of FGM. While some individual indicators they may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the pupil. It is important to note that the pupil may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

Indicators that a pupil may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society.
- The pupil coming from a community known to adopt FGM.
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM.
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE.

Indicators that FGM may take place soon include:

- When a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin.
- A girl confiding that she is to have a ‘special procedure’ or a ceremony to ‘become a woman.’
- A girl requesting help from a teacher if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- A girl, or her family member, talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where FGM is prevalent.

All Trust staff will be vigilant to the signs that FGM has already taken place so that help can be offered, enquiries can be made to protect others, and criminal investigations can begin. Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include the pupil:

- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet.
- Spending prolonged periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Having prolonged or repeated absences from school, followed by withdrawal or depression.
- Being reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.

- Asking for help but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

FGM is included in the definition of so-called “**‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA),**” which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty

Under the Health and Care Act 2022, it is illegal to conduct, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK. It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK.

Virginity testing - Also known as hymen, ‘2-finger’ or vaginal examination, this is defined as any examination (with or without contact) of the female genitalia intended to establish if vaginal intercourse has taken place. This is irrespective of whether consent has been given. Vaginal examination has no established scientific merit or clinical indication.

Hymenoplasty - A procedure which can involve a number of different techniques, but typically involving stitching or surgery, undertaken to reconstruct a hymen with the intent that the person bleeds the next time they have vaginal intercourse. Hymenoplasty is different to procedures that may be performed for clinical reasons, e.g. surgery to address discomfort or menstrual complications.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty are forms of violence against women and girls and are part of the cycle of HBA and can be precursors to child or forced marriage and other forms of family and/or community coercive behaviours, including physical and emotional control. Victims are pressurised into undergoing these procedures, often by family members or their intended husbands’ family to fulfil the requirement that a woman remains ‘pure’ before marriage. Those who ‘fail’ to meet this requirement are likely to suffer further abuse, including emotional and physical abuse, disownment and even honour killings.

The procedures are degrading and intrusive, and can result in extreme psychological trauma, provoking conditions such as anxiety, depression and PTSD, as well as physical harm and medical complications. Staff will be alert to the possible presence of stress, anxiety and other psychological or behavioural signs, and mental health support should be made available where appropriate.

Victims face barriers in coming forward, e.g. they may not know that the abuse was abnormal or wrong at the time, and may feel shameful, having been taught that speaking out against family and/or the community is wrong, or being scared about the repercussions of speaking out. The school will educate pupils about the harms of these practices and dispel myths, e.g. the belief that virginity determines the worth of a woman, and establish an environment where pupils feel safe enough to make a disclosure.

Pupils aged 13 and older are considered to be most at risk, but it can affect those as young as 8, and anyone with female genitalia can be a victim regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, disability or socioeconomic status. All staff will be aware of the following indicators that a pupil is at risk of or has been subjected to a virginity test and/or hymenoplasty:

- A pupil is known to have requested either procedure or asks for help
- Family members disclose that the pupil has already undergone the practices
- Pain and discomfort after the procedures, e.g. difficulty in walking or sitting for a prolonged period which was not a problem previously
- Concern from family members that the pupil is in a relationship, or plans for them to be married
- A close relative has been threatened with either procedure or has already been subjected to one
- A pupil has already experienced or is at risk of other forms of HBA
- A pupil is already known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues

- A pupil discloses other concerns that could be an indication of abuse, e.g. they may state that they do not feel safe at home, that family members will not let them out the house and/or that family members are controlling
- A pupil displays signs of trauma and an increase in emotional and psychological needs, e.g. withdrawal, anxiety, depression, or notable change in behaviour
- A pupil appears fearful of their family or a particular family member
- Unexplained absence from school, potentially to go abroad
- Changes in behaviour, e.g. a deterioration in schoolwork, attendance, or attainment

The above list is not exhaustive, but if any of these indicators are identified, staff members will immediately raise concerns with the DSL. An assessment of the risk they face will be undertaken. If there is believed to be immediate danger, the police will be contacted without delay.

Schools within the Trust will not involve families and community members in cases involving virginity testing and hymenoplasty, including trying to mediate with family or using a community member as an interpreter, as this may increase the risk of harm to the pupil, including expediting arrangements for the procedure.

Forced marriage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The school will support any victims to seek help by:

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

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

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

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

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

Radicalisation

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

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

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

Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the Trust’s wider safeguarding duties. Schools within the Trust will actively assess the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. The Trust will ensure that procedures are in place for staff to be alerted to changes in pupils’ behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. The Trust will also ensure that staff can use their professional judgement to identify pupils who may be susceptible to extremist ideologies and radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting the DSL or making a Prevent referral. The Trust and its schools will work together with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate.

The Trust will ensure that schools engage with parents and families, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. In doing so, the Trust will assist and advise family members who raise concerns and provide information for support mechanisms.

The DSLs in the schools within the Trust will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect pupils against the risk of radicalisation. The DSL will hold formal training sessions with all members of staff to ensure they are aware of the risk indicators and their duties regarding preventing radicalisation.

The Prevent duty

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools within the Trust are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, known as **“the Prevent duty”**. The Prevent duty will form part of the Trust’s wider safeguarding obligations.

The Trust’s procedures for carrying out the Prevent duty, including how it will engage and implement the Channel programme, are outlined in school-level Prevent Duty Policies.

Pupils with family members in prison

Pupils with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support, as necessary. They will receive a copy of ‘Are you a young person with a family member in prison?’ from Action for Prisoners’ Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Pupils required to give evidence in court

Pupils required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or crimes they have witnessed, will be offered appropriate pastoral support.

[Primary schools only] Pupils will be provided with the booklet ‘Going to Court’ from HMCTS where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

[Secondary schools and post-16 settings only] Pupils will be provided with the booklet ‘Going to Court and being a witness’ from HMCTS where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Mental health

All staff within the Trust will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems and schools will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional. Staff will, however, be encouraged to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one. The Trust will

ensure that staff are also aware of how pupils' experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Staff within the Trust and its schools who have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern are encouraged by the Trust to act in line with this policy and their school-level Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL or DDSL(s).

The Trust will ensure its schools can access a range of advice to help staff members identify pupils in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies. It will also ensure that there is a wide variety of advice and support offered to its schools while ensuring an ethos that is positive towards being open about mental health is adopted and implemented in each school.

In all cases of mental health difficulties, the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy will be consulted and adhered to at all times.

Safeguarding children with medical conditions

A pupil having a medical condition, including an allergy or a condition requiring delegated healthcare tasks, does not in itself indicate that the pupil is at greater safeguarding risk. However, staff will remain alert to circumstances in which a pupil may be at increased risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation because of their medical condition. This may include, for example, where relevant information about a pupil's medical condition is not provided to the school, or where a pupil is repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, thereby placing them at risk. Where such concerns arise, staff will report them to the DSL or DDSL in accordance with this policy so that consideration can be given to whether safeguarding action or referral is required. The school will also have regard to the statutory guidance *Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions* and relevant guidance on allergy safety in schools.

Serious violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a pupil is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a pupil's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent from school.
- Having been suspended, spent time in AP or permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- Having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence.
- Having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence.

Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSL.

Schools within the Trust will cooperate with safeguarding partners, CSCS, the police, and other relevant agencies where appropriate.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The Trust recognises that violence against women and girls (VAWG) encompasses a range of forms of violence, abuse and harmful behaviour that disproportionately affect women and girls. The Trust recognises the importance of prevention and early intervention and will promote a culture in which misogyny, sexism, sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercive and controlling behaviour and other forms of gender-based harm are recognised, challenged and responded to appropriately.

The Trust recognises that misogynistic attitudes and behaviours, including those encountered or reinforced online, can contribute to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, child-on-child exploitation and coercion, and the normalisation of harmful attitudes towards women and girls. Staff will remain alert to the influence of online content, including misogynistic ideologies, influencers and communities, which may contribute to harmful attitudes or behaviours.

Staff will challenge misogynistic, sexist and other discriminatory language and behaviour and will not dismiss sexual harassment or other harmful behaviour as “banter”. The Trust recognises that downplaying such behaviour can contribute to an unsafe culture in which abuse becomes normalised, and children may be less likely to report concerns.

Where behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, staff will report it to the DSL or DDSL and it will be considered and responded to in accordance with this policy. Appropriate support will be considered for all children involved, taking account of the needs and safety of the victim and the safeguarding needs of the alleged perpetrator.

Adult involvement in the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images

The Trust’s full response to the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images is outlined in the Making or Sharing of Nude or Semi-nude Images Policy.

Sexually motivated incidents

The Trust will remain aware that not all instances involving the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images will be between children and young people, and in some cases may involve adults posing as a child for the purpose of obtaining nude and semi-nude images from persons under 18.

Staff will be aware of the signs that an adult is involved in the sharing the nude or semi-nude images. These include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing unsolicited sexual images.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Being coerced or pressured into doing sexual things, including producing sexual imagery.
- Being offered money or gifts.
- Being threatened or blackmailed into sharing nude or semi-nude images, and/or further sexual activity.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated incidents involving the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images involving adults may also be called “**sextortion**”, where the offender threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they do something to prevent it, e.g. paying money. In these cases, offenders often pose as children and:

- Groom or coerce the victim into sending nudes or semi-nudes in order to blackmail them.
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person, e.g. via hacking.
- Use digitally manipulated and/or AI-generated images of the child or young person.

Staff will be aware of the signs of sextortion, which include:

- Being contacted by an online account they do not know but appears to be from somebody under the age of 18.
- Quickly being engaged in sexually explicit communications.
- The offender sharing sexual images first.
- The conversation being moved from a public to a private and/or encrypted platform.
- Told their online accounts have been hacked in order to obtain images, personal information, and contacts.
- Being blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details.
- Being shown stolen or digitally manipulated/generated images of the victim.

Appendix B

Definitions

The terms **“children”** and **“child”** refer to anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy, **“safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children”** is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of pupils as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting pupils from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of pupils’ mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all pupils to have the best outcomes.

For the purposes of this policy, **“consent”** is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

For the purposes of this policy, **“sexual violence”** refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

For the purposes of this policy, **“sexual harassment”** refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content.

- Upskirting.
- Sexualised online bullying.
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
- Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

For the purposes of this policy, **“upskirting”** refers to the act, as identified in the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person’s clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person’s genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including pupils and staff, of any gender can be a victim of upskirting.

For the purposes of this policy, **"making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos"** refers to the creation, possession or sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos involving anyone under the age of 18. This includes consensual and non-consensual sharing, AI-generated content where it depicts a child, and content shared online or offline.

"Deepfakes" and **"deepnudes"** refer to digitally manipulated or AI-generated images, audio or videos that falsely depict a person. Where these involve nude or semi-nude images of a child, they will be managed in accordance with the Trust's procedures for responding to the making or sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos.

For the purposes of this policy, **“abuse”** is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others – this can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

For the purposes of this policy, **“physical abuse”** is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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

For the purposes of this policy, **“sexual abuse”** is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

For the purposes of this policy, **“neglect”** is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child’s health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.