



LUX MUNDI

LIGHT OF THE WORLD ~ CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Safeguarding Child Protection Policy

CARDINAL POLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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2024

APPROVED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY ON: ...25/9/2024.....

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS SIGNATURE:.....

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1. Cardinal Pole School Vision

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a learning community for all based upon partnership and respect. It is a strong and vibrant place which recognizes the importance and individual needs of every pupil and member of staff. Praise and encouragement are vital in creating a climate of learning and high expectations supported by teaching of the highest quality. The school is full of confident, creative and fulfilled young people and staff. They are celebrated as individuals – unique creations of God – who deserve our support, love and trust as they begin the great journey of life.

2. Mission Statement

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of **service** guiding young people on a path to **opportunity, aspiration, and reward**, founded on Catholic values. We serve our students through bespoke interventions that meets the needs of all. This is shared with all stakeholders, to empower our community to become “Lovers of Reading”. Cardinal Pole Catholic School is committed to providing a range of opportunities for staff and students to become lifelong lovers of reading through workshops, authors visits, whole school events and programmes. We are a community of aspirant writers where talent is nurtured o flourish by expert and experienced staff, authors, and other professionals. We reward our literate learners by celebrating their successes, progress, achievements in all areas of literacy and beyond.

3. School Safeguarding Team

a) Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

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b) Deputy DSLs:

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c) Safeguarding Link Governor:

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4. Introduction

a) Safeguarding is defined as:

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

Cardinal Pole Catholic School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. We believe that:

- All children/young people have the right to be protected from harm;
- Children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school;
- Children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- All children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs;
- All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other’s values and

- support each other;
- All children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs – a happy healthy sociable child/young person will achieve better educationally;
- Schools can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours; and
- All staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse.

In addition to the above, at Cardinal Pole Catholic School pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it. It is recognized that some children, including those who have a social worker, potentially have a greater risk of harm.

Cardinal Pole Catholic School will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (September 2024)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England & Wales (December 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)
- The Procedures of the London Safeguarding Children Board (September 2023)
- The Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 2002 section 175
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (November 2018)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Schools behaviour Policy

b) Overall Aims

Together with the Behaviour Policy, this policy will contribute to safeguarding our pupils and promoting their welfare by:

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and pupils;
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust ethos in the school, built on mutual respect, and shared values
- Introducing appropriate work within the curriculum;
- Encouraging pupils and parents to participate;
- Alerting staff to the signs and indicators that all might not be well;
- Developing staff awareness of the causes of abuse;
- Developing staff's awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities their pupils face;
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage; and
- Reducing the potential risks pupils face of being exposed to violence, extremism, exploitation, or victimisation.

Together with the Behaviour Policy, this policy will contribute to supporting our pupils by:

- Identifying and protecting the most vulnerable
- Identifying individual needs where possible; and
- Supporting plans to meet those needs

This policy will contribute to the protection of our pupils by:

- Including appropriate work within the curriculum;
- Implementing child protection policies and procedures; and
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents and agencies.

The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the wellbeing and safety of its pupils.

This policy applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school. There are three main elements to our policy:

- Prevention: through the creation and maintenance of a positive school atmosphere, reflected in its teaching and the pastoral support given to pupils, where pupils are valued as individuals and high expectations are explicitly expressed. At Cardinal Pole Catholic School pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- Protection: by following agreed procedures and ensuring that staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns. The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its pupils.
- Support: to pupils and staff and to children who may have been abused.

The school is clear that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, may breach children's rights, as set out in the Human Rights Acts.

5. School Responsibilities

We will follow the procedures set out in the London Child Protection Procedures and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children and Families to:

- Ensure we have designated advisers for safeguarding children who have received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding children.
- Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and governor knows the name of the designated teacher responsible for safeguarding children and their role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated teacher responsible for safeguarding children.
- Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children by setting out its obligations in the prospectus.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the safeguarding children register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding children matters including attendance at case conference
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in secure locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

6. Mental Health, Safeguarding and Child Protection

All staff at Cardinal Pole Catholic School are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or

exploitation.

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that may also be a safeguarding concern, they should raise the issue by informing School Safeguarding Team by completing a Safeguarding, Bullying or Wellbeing Referral Form and handing it into the main office. In urgent cases, a member of the Safeguarding Team must be contacted immediately.

7. LGBTQI+ pupils

We will provide LGBTQI+ children with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. In the first instance, this will normally be the child's pastoral team, School Chaplain or the Wellbeing Team.

8. Children with a Social Worker and Looked after Children (LAC)

We recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker, for example by referring them for additional support from the school Wellbeing Support Team.

The school will liaise with the local Virtual School in order to monitor the attendance, attainment and progress of any looked-after-children.

9. Early help

We recognise that members of staff need to be alert to the need for early help for a child who:

- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care;
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit; or
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

10. Alternative provision

We recognise that we are responsible for the safeguarding of any child placed in an alternative provision provider.

11. Online safety

The school has an Online Safety Policy that is known to all staff and pupils.

When pupils use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. However, many pupils are able to access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, as a school we teach online safety knowledge and skills through the school's PSHE programme. There is also advice and guidance on the school website for pupils and parents on how to keep themselves safe online. In addition, all school computer equipment, whether on or off site is monitored around the clock by Smoothwall and alerts – if and when they happen – are sent immediately to the DSL team for follow up.

Staff will be given training on the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to our Smoothwall filtering and monitoring system as part of their core safeguarding training.

School governors will regularly review the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems. They will ensure that the leadership and relevant staff are aware of and understand the systems in place; manage them effectively; and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The school will share information with parents and carers about what systems we have in place to filter and monitor online use; what the school are asking children to do online and who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

In addition to the above, the school will ensure that pupils will be kept safe when accessing online learning inside and outside the school by:

- Using a single closely-monitored portal for the posting of work
- Ensure that all communication with pupils regarding work takes place via the schools VLE platform(s)
- Following the Teaching and Learning Policy where it relates to remote teaching and learning.

12. Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

a) Managing Referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for safeguarding and child protection at Cardinal Pole Catholic School. The key role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, working closely with the Safeguarding Coordinator is to:

- manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school;
- work with external agencies and professionals on matter of safety and safeguarding;
- undertake training;
- raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents; and
- ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
- be aware of pupils who have a social worker
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

b) Working with others

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSLs) will:

- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
- liaise with the Headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENCOs, or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.

c) Training

The key training elements are:

Induction Training – this is mandatory and will include;

- the child protection policy;
- the behaviour policy;
- the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- and the role of the designated safeguarding lead

DSLs – attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.

All other staff – will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

d) When is recording needed?

When there are any concerns that might indicate possible abuse or neglect. This might include:

- Physical presentation of the child.
- Marks on a child's body.
- Unusual/different behaviour (including academic functioning).
- Mood changes.
- Statements, stories or drawings from the child.
- Information from others, including other children
- Other concerns such as parental behaviour or non-school attendance which might indicate possible abuse.
- Direct disclosures or allegations made by the child.

e) Who should record?

- Teachers.
- Other school staff.
- Other Hackney Education staff in regular contact with the child, such as for example the school attendance officer/adviser or the educational psychologist.

f) What kind of information should be recorded?

Schools need to ensure that they have a log of information for any child where there are child protection concerns. Any member of staff who has a concern about a child should promptly make a written record even when this is communicated verbally. Concerns must be passed to the Safeguarding Team who will follow up and record on CPOMS. In the unusual circumstance that a member of the Safeguarding Team is not available, concerns should be passed on to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Headteacher.

g) When to involve the police

The school makes use of the following advice which covers incidents on school and college premises where students have potentially committed a crime:

'When to call the police' produced by the national Police Chiefs Council (NPCC)

It provides guidance on what schools and colleges should bear in mind when considering contacting the police. This advice covers the following situations:

Assault; Criminal damage; Cyber-crime; Drugs; Harassment; Sexual offences; Theft; Weapons.

The advice aims to support schools and college to make defensible decisions when considering whether to involve the police. This advice does not cover safeguarding incidents. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) will be made immediately following the usual procedures.

h) Children and the court system

In relation to children in the court system, the school will follow the guidance as set out in HM Courts and Tribunals Service, 2017b 12-17 year olds.

The Headteacher will always be made aware whenever police officers are on site. Should the police need to speak to a child or conduct a search on site, there will always be a responsible adult present and where possible consent will be obtained from parents beforehand. MTIPs (Strip searches) will not be allowed to take place on the school site.

i) DSL Annual Report to Governors

The Annual Report to Governors is a statutory requirement and applies to maintained schools, academies and independent schools. The annual report should be compiled by the DSL with

oversight from the Headteacher. It provides an opportunity for schools to monitor compliance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, highlight issues and plan for improvements. The report is an opportunity for the Governors to discuss safeguarding and child protection at a strategic level. After being scrutinised by the governing body a copy of the report should be filed with the minutes of the meeting. The report should include:

- The period covered;
- Name of the author and date presented to Governors;
- Names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s);
- Training record for all staff;
- Audit of relevant policies and review dates;
- Number of families referred for Early Help (including under the Common Support Framework)
- Number of referrals made to CSC (with information regarding the nature of the referral);
- Number of meetings attended by type: Strategy Meeting, Initial Child Protection Conference, Core Group Meeting, Child Protection Review Conference, Core Group Meeting, Multi Agency Team Meetings or Children and Young People Partnership Panel Meetings;
- Number of pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan;
- Number of pupils subject to a Child in Need Plan;
- Number of pupils in Local Authority Care;
- Number of allegations against staff and outcomes of investigations;
- Comparative analysis from previous years.

This report should facilitate an ongoing discussion across the school about continuous improvement in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

13. Support for Pupils

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

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Services, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- Ensuring that, where a pupil on the safeguarding children register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.
- The Wellbeing Support Team.

N.B. Cardinal Pole will follow the Hackney policy on safeguarding children but reserve the right in particular circumstances to inform parents about what action is to happen.

Responding to Disclosures

Disclosures or information that a child has been harmed or is at risk may be received from pupils, parents/carers, other professionals or members of the public. The school recognises that those who disclose such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures with sensitivity. Such information cannot remain confidential and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a record using clear, straightforward language.

14. Confidentiality and information sharing

Schools need to comply with government requirements, the policy of Hackney Council and Hackney Education.

These include the following:

- Academic files on children must be open to parents.
- Third party information is not to be disclosed without consent.
- Access to files can be denied for certain prescribed reasons such as in the case of actual, alleged or suspected child abuse as set out in the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989 & Education (Pupil Information) (England) 2005.
- Parents may have to make formal requests to see their child's child protection file. Working notes are not subject to disclosure, but must be eventually summarised on file and then destroyed.

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

As well as keeping records of concerns, discussions and decisions, DSLs will keep a record of the rationale for any decisions made.

a) Who should have access to child protection information?

Child protection information is confidential and should not be kept on the child's school file. Each school/centre should have a separate, secure filing system for child protection concerns. This filing system should be easily available to the designated person.

At Cardinal Pole we use the CPOMS online system. These records can only be accessed by the Safeguarding, Pastoral and Attendance Teams and the Headteacher.

b) Sharing information with parents

Parents do not have automatic access to the child protection file. However, it would be best practice to share all information held unless there is a valid reason to withhold it. There is some information that must not be disclosed:

- That which, in the Headteacher's opinion, would be likely to cause serious harm to the pupil concerned or to another person.
- Information that is likely to cause serious harm to the physical or mental health or condition of the child or someone else.
- Information as to whether the child is or has been subject to or may be at risk of child abuse, where the disclosure of that information would not be in the best interests of the child.
- Information concerning the child which also relates to another person who can be identified from that information or which identifies another person as the source of that information, unless the person has consented to the disclosure, or it is reasonable in all the circumstances to disclose the information without his/her consent or the person is an employee of the LA or of the school.
- The school report to the child protection conference should be shared with the parent(s) two days before the conference takes place.

c) Sharing information with staff

Access to the information on file should be on a need-to-know basis among the staff. This can only be decided on a case-by-case basis. The confidentiality of the child and family should be respected as far as possible, but the welfare of the child is paramount. It would be unlikely that every member of staff needs to know the details of a case. Generally speaking, the closer the day-to-day contact with the child, the more likely the need to know an outline of the case.

d) Sharing Information with other schools/agencies

All agencies whose staff come into contact with children in their daily activities, and/or who provide services to adults who are parents, must have systems in place to ensure “the agency has arrangements for effective multi-agency working to promote children’s welfare and safeguard them from harm, including information sharing”. In particular, that, referrals to LA Children’s Social Care use the appropriate inter-agency referral form and that reports are provided to child protection conferences and related meetings and that a member of the School Safeguarding Team attends.

e) Sharing information with CYPs

All information must be shared with Children’s Social Care and/or Police and Health as appropriate, where there is concern that a child is at risk of significant harm. Child protection information should not ordinarily be shared with agencies other than these statutory agencies, e.g. information should not be released to solicitors etc. Where such a request is made, it is best to seek the advice of the legal department Hackney Education.

f) Sharing information with other schools

Conversations between designated personnel at different schools (e.g. sharing concerns or asking for information about sibling groups) are perfectly acceptable. Where possible, consent from parents should be sought before a conversation takes place. Any relevant child protection information coming to light should be carefully logged.

g) Equality Legislation

The school recognises and adheres to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics. We will support students with protected characteristics and take positive action, where proportionate, to deal with disadvantages these pupils may face.

15. How to Report Safeguarding, Bullying and Wellbeing Concerns

All concerns or disclosures must be reported to the safeguarding team using the Safeguarding, Bullying or Wellbeing Referral Form which is available from the main office and both staffrooms. If the concern is urgent, it must be reported to the safeguarding team in person as soon as possible before completing a red form. Completed forms must be handed in to the main office who will then pass on to the safeguarding team. Concerns must never be emailed. A member of the Safeguarding Team will then follow up the referral and involve external agencies such as the police or children’s social care as required. Cardinal Pole reserves the right to inform parents of any action being taken and all safeguarding concerns will be logged and tracked on CPOMS.

a) Concerns about adults

At Cardinal Pole Catholic School, we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the Headteacher without delay (or where that is not possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead); any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors who can be contacted via the Headteacher’s PA. Where required, the LADO will always be contacted.

16. Safer Recruitment and managing allegations against staff

The school will only accept a curriculum vitae (CV) alongside a full application and will never accept one on its own.

The school may conduct online searches as part of due diligence checks on shortlisted candidates.

a) Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors who can be contacted by emailing the Headteacher’s PA – tracymortimer@cardinalpole.co.uk

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the Headteacher/Principal.

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The Headteacher/Principal has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the LADO (see below).

Allegations

It is an allegation if the person* has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

Low-level Concerns

Low-level concerns will be initially shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other nominated person) and the Headteacher will always make the final decision on how to respond. Low-level concerns about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers and we will consult with the LADO if we are unsure whether low-level concerns about a member of staff meet the harm threshold.

Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher/principal should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

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

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

The school will take action where it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

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

a) Supply Teachers

Whilst we are not the employer of supply teachers, we will ensure that allegations against supply teachers are dealt with properly. We will not make a decision to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

We will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process.

We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Head teacher.

- The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO for safeguarding children.
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LADO for safeguarding children.
- The school will follow the DfE (Department for Education) procedures managing allegations against staff, a copy of which will be readily available in the school related policies: Whistleblowing Policy

b) Initial consideration

The LADO will discuss the matter with the Headteacher and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. N.B. The Head should not investigate the allegation at this stage. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establish that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the LADO will immediately refer to children's social care and ask for a strategy discussion in accordance with "Working Together" to be convened straight away. In those circumstances the strategy discussion should include the LADO and the Headteacher.

If there is not cause to suspect that "significant harm" is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the LADO should immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion should also involve the school and any other agencies involved with the child.

c) Action following initial consideration

Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence it will be for the employer to deal with it. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the Headteacher should institute appropriate action within 3 working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action the Headteacher and the school personnel adviser should discuss who will undertake that with the LADO. In some settings and circumstances it may be appropriate for the disciplinary investigation to be conducted by a person who is independent of the school - see paragraph 21. In any case the investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the employer within 10 working days.

On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors should consult the LADO, and decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed within 2 working days. If a hearing is needed it should be held within 15 working days.

In any case in which children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children are in need of protection, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors should take account of any relevant information obtained in the course of those enquiries when considering disciplinary action.

The LADO should continue to liaise with the school to monitor progress of the case and provide advice /support when required/requested.

d) Case subject to police investigation

If a criminal investigation is required, the police will aim to complete their enquiries as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation and will keep the progress of the case under review. They should at the outset set a target date for reviewing progress of the investigation and consulting the CPS about whether to proceed with the investigation, charge the individual with an offence, or close the case. Wherever possible that review should take place no later than 4 weeks after the initial action meeting and if the decision is to continue to investigate the allegation dates for subsequent review should be set at that point. (It is open to the police to consult the CPS about the evidence that will need to be obtained in order to charge a person with an offence at any stage).

If the police and/or CPS decide not to charge the individual with an offence, or decide to administer a caution, or the person is acquitted by a Court, the police should wherever possible aim to pass all information they have which may be relevant to a disciplinary case to the employer within 3 working days of the decision. In those circumstances the employer and the LADO should proceed as described above.

N.B. In any case in which children's social care has undertaken enquiries to determine whether the child or children need protection, any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case should also be passed to the school.

If the person is convicted of an offence the police should also inform the employer straight away so that appropriate action can be taken.

e) Referral to DfE

If on conclusion of the case the school ceases to use the person's services, or the person ceases to provide his/her services, the school should consult the LADO about whether a referral to DfE is required. If a referral is appropriate the report should be made within one month.

17. The Prevent Duty

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'. Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalized, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have. We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

At Cardinal Pole Catholic School, we are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

a) Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups
- out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships
- secretive behaviour
- online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- advocating violence towards others

18. Types of Abuse & Neglect

a) Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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

c) Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may

involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

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

19. Other Forms of Abuse

a) Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

b) Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections; Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

c) Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);

- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

More information can be found in:

Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

d) Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation; children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

e) County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism¹⁵ should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral will be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

f) Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)

So-called ‘honour-based’ violence (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBA are abusive (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated

Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

g) Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating. spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure (unlike in the medical profession where an observation may have been made).

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out; and discuss any such cases with the DSL and children's social care. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases.

20. Child-on-child Abuse

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

We ensure that:

- procedures to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse are in place;
- the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously;
- how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with;
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported;

- a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported;
- a statement which makes clear there should be a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off, for example, as “banter”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children;
- recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms child on child abuse can take, such as:
 - bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
 - physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (December 2020)

We will explain to children who are victims of sexual violence or harassment that the law is there to protect them.

We will consider the possibility of intra-familial harm and put the necessary support in place, following any such incident.

We will liaise closely with statutory and safeguarding partners to achieve the above.

21. Domestic Abuse

The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, psychological, sexual emotional and financial abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected”.

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

a) Definition

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- physical or sexual abuse;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

We recognise that harm can result from children witnessing the ill-treatment of others and that this is particularly relevant when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects.

The definition can be found here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The school is part of the Operation Encompass information-sharing programme.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

22. Children Missing from Education (CME)

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Pupils being absent, as well as missing, from education can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, including sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation. We will always refer any such concerns to the appropriate authorities.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up when pupils' school attendance is a concern. This will include unexplainable and /or persistent absences from school. This means we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) the school has:

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:

- leave school to be home educated
- move away from the school's location
- remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
- are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
- are permanently excluded.

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority. When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

23. Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected

by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff will notify the Safeguarding Team when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements. On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

24. Safeguarding and children with SEND

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

We provide extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

25. Whistleblowing

Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy.

A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a legal obligation has been breached
- there has been a miscarriage of justice
- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed.

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government: 0808 8005000.

Safeguarding, Bullying or Wellbeing Referral

If your concern is urgent, speak to a member of the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Team **immediately** before completing this form.
An urgent concern is one where there is an imminent risk of harm to the child.

PLEASE HAND IN COMPLETED FORM TO THE MAIN OFFICE

Section A (TO BE COMPLETED BY REFERRER)

Staff name:	Date:
Student name:	Year group:
What is your concern? Safeguarding <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Give as much detail as possible and continue on the back if necessary.	
.....	
Have you spoken to the student about your concern?	
Does the student know you are making a referral?	

Section B (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SAFEGUARDING & WELLBEING TEAM)

Screened by:	Email sent to Referrer:
Added to Referrals Log:	Referral allocated to:
Outcome:	

Appendix B – Recommended reading for staff (selected)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Preventing Bullying

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

What to do if You're Worried a Child is being Abused

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

The Prevent Duty Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-prevent-duty-safeguarding-learners-vulnerable-to-radicalisation>

Data Protection Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools>

Appendix C – Changes to KCSIE 2024

Definition of safeguarding

The definition of ‘safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’ has been updated to reflect the changes made in Working together to safeguard children (DfE, 2023a).

The definition now includes the additional points of:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online.

Early help

The guidance on ‘Early help’ has also been amended in line with Working together.

The update adds that professionals should be alert to the need for early help for a child who:

- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

Abuse, neglect and exploitation

Where applicable, ‘abuse and neglect’ has been changed throughout the document to ‘abuse, neglect and exploitation.’ The definition of ‘abuse’ has also been changed to clarify that harm can include children witnessing the ill-treatment of others and that this is particularly relevant when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects.

Children absent from education

In outlining the signs that children may be at risk of harm, the guidance updates ‘deliberately missing education’ to read ‘unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education.’

Data protection

The updated guidance recommends that education professionals read the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools (DfE, 2024b)

Alternative provision

The updated guidance clarifies that when a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil.

Children and the court system

The updated guidance now directs schools to two guides that support children in the court system, one for 5 to 11 year olds (HM Courts and Tribunals Service, 2017a) and the other for 12 to 17 year olds (HM Courts and Tribunals Service, 2017b).

Holding and sharing information

The updated guidance highlights that, as well as keeping records of concerns, discussions and decisions, designated safeguarding leads should keep record of the rationale for any decisions made.