



CANNOCK CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

A C H I E V E M E N T F O R A L L

SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2025

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

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Key Safeguarding Contacts

Role in School	Name	Level of Safeguarding Training
Headteacher	Mr Iain Turnbull	Level 1
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Jill Simpson	Level 3
Senior Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (SDDSL)	Mrs Chandni Bhatti	Level 3
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Mrs Caroline Mills	Level 3
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding	Mrs Claire Aldridge	Level 3
Chair of Governors	Claire Aldridge	Level 3
Designated teacher for Looked After Children	Mrs Jill Simpson	Level 3
Mental Health Lead	Mrs Chandni Bhatti	Level 3
PSHE Lead	Mrs J Rowlinson	Level 1

1 Purpose and Aims

The purpose of our Safeguarding policy at Cannock Chase High School is to ensure that we:

- **are committed** to developing a robust safeguarding culture of vigilance and challenge;
- **build resilience** by raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues and equipping children with the language and skills to keep themselves safe;
- **establish a safe environment** in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and where children are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and know that they will be listened to;
- **support vulnerable students** who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse;
- **prevent unsuitable people** from working with children by ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of **all** school staff, supply staff and volunteers to work with our children and maintain an active, ongoing vigilance in line with the safeguarding culture.

Our aim is to follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) by **knowing** and **understanding** that:

- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility and the **voice of the child** is evident;
- **everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play;
- **everyone** should ensure that their approach is **child-centred** considering, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child;
- by establishing a safe environment, we enable our children to learn and develop within an ethos of openness;
- **no single practitioner** can have the full picture of a child's needs and circumstances;
- if children and families are to receive the **right help at the right time**, **everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action;
- the importance of providing children with a balanced curriculum including PHSE, healthy relationship education, online safety, sexting, child-on-child abuse as well as 'abuse outside the home', County Lines, contextualised safeguarding issues, and Child Criminal Exploitation (incl

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)). Also supporting this with online activities, enabling children to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks;

- undertaking the role to enable children and young people at our school to have **best outcomes**;
- ensuring that as a school we have awareness of our staff's knowledge and understanding, as well as embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a **robust element** of our school practice.

At Cannock Chase High School we strive to safeguard by:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge (this bullet point is new);
- protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home, including online** (this last part has been added);
- preventing the 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.

This policy provides guidance to all adults working within the school, whether paid or voluntary, or directly employed by the school or a third party and should be read in conjunction with the documents [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).

- This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We will also inform parents/carers about this policy when their children join our school.
- This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis or sooner should legislation/guidance change.
- This policy sets out how the school's Governing Body discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at this school. Our policy applies to all staff; paid and unpaid, working in the school, including Governors.
- The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers) at the point of induction, alongside our Staff Code of Conduct Policy.
- Our Governing Body, working with the Senior Leadership Team and especially our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children will read at least Part 1 or Annex A (condensed version of Part 1) of the KCSiE 2025 guidance.
- All staff who work directly with children, are provided with, and have read at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- The school follows the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership policies and procedures. [Staffsscp](#)

2 Ethos and Culture

At Cannock Chase High School our children's welfare is of paramount importance to us and we are a child centred school. Our children are reassured that they have a voice, will be listened to and what they say will be taken seriously. They know that they will be supported and kept safe. They will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse.

Children are encouraged to talk freely with staff if they are worried or concerned about something and our staff understand that a victim of any type of abuse should never feel ashamed for making a report. Their views and wishes will inform any assessment and provision for them.

We make every effort to listen to and capture the voice of children to enable us to have a clear understanding of their daily lived experiences. This includes understanding that the child's presenting behaviours and observations by staff also form part of the child's voice.

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

This does not prevent ALL staff from using professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Our staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children which facilitate this communication.

We understand our statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and we maintain a professional attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. We expect ALL staff, Governors, volunteers and visitors to share our commitment, maintaining a safe environment and a culture of vigilance.

Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours, that underpins this commitment. We work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.

We have a culture of vigilance and staff are confident and competent in the timely challenge of unacceptable behaviours and these are dealt with appropriately and robustly. Staff do not accept these behaviours as 'banter', 'having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not to see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident, such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. However, concerns can accumulate over time and are evidenced by building a picture of harm, particularly true in cases of abuse or neglect.

We know that it is crucial that our staff record and pass on any concerns in a timely manner and in accordance with this policy, to allow the DSL/SDDSL/DDSL to build up a picture and access support at the earliest opportunity.

When dealing with safeguarding matters, we are conscious of the language and terminology that we use, especially in front of children. Sometimes reference is made to a child who has been subjected to abuse as a victim. However, not all children will consider themselves a victim nor will they want to be referred to in this way. We are conscious of this and when managing any incident, we will be prepared to use terminology that children are most comfortable with.

In KCSiE 2025 guidance, reference is made to alleged perpetrator and perpetrator, however we will try to avoid using these terms and instead we will refer to children and young people who have 'displayed' or 'instigated' particular behaviours. We will ensure that **all** children involved receive support.

We work closely with safeguarding partners and share the same goals, learn with and from each other, have what we need to help families, acknowledge and appreciate difference as well as challenging each other.

We acknowledge the four principles that as professionals we should follow when working with parents and carers:

- effective partnership and the importance of building strong, positive, trusting and co-operative relationships
- respectful, non-blaming, clear and inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication that is adapted to the needs of parents and carers
- empowering parents and carers to participate in decision making by equipping them with information, keeping them updated and directing them to further resources
- involving parents and carers in the design of processes and services that affect them.

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work, and support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to signpost and seek further support as appropriate, this could take the form of clinical supervision.

[Education Support helpline - free and confidential emotional support for teachers and education staff](#)

3 Legislation, Guidance and Links to Other Policies

This policy has been devised with due regard for the statutory guidance from the DfE [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) (KCSiE) and this document is read alongside:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#);
- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures](#)
- [What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused-Advice for Practitioners](#);
- [Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff](#);

Please also see our [website](#) for the following policies.

- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Code of Conduct – Staff, Parent, Carer and Visitors
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

4 The Role of All Staff in Keeping Children Safe

All staff have read and have a good understanding of at least part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) and are aware of the safeguarding link to other policies relating to their daily practice including but not limited to Code of Conduct for staff and the schools Behaviour policy. Staff confirm they have read KCSiE via MyConcern or by notifying the SDDSL.

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see para 142 for further information and [Filtering and Monitoring Standards](#)). This training takes place at induction and is regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates at staff briefings and as emailed – bite sizes as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide our staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff know who the DSL, SDDSL and DDSL are, and as well as being the experts in this field, are there to support staff, volunteers, and Governing Body.

All staff are aware of their responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online including contextualised safeguarding. Staff are confident in exercising **professional curiosity** and understand that knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation to identify cases of children who may be in need of our help or protection. They are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff are also aware that the following are early help indicators when a child:

- 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 (previously it was 'family member in prison'), or is affected by parental offending;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.

All staff, but especially the DSL/SDDSL consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, County Lines and radicalisation.

All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. They know that in many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. This includes AI generated child sexual abuse material.

Guidance

AI Guidance

All staff are also mindful that disinformation, misinformation and conspiracy theories can be an online safety risk/concern.

All staff know what to do when a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality by only involving those who need

to be involved, such as the DSL/SDDSL and local authority children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. They are aware of their statutory reporting responsibilities and duty in relation to FGM.

All staff know how to reassure children that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse, exploitation and/or neglect. Nor should a child ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it and are confident to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, effectively giving children and their families the right help at the right time.

All staff are aware of how to make a referral to children's social care, especially Section 17 (children in need) and Section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with their potential role in such assessments.

All staff understand their responsibility to report concerns about the behaviour of any adult in our school and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

All staff understand their responsibility to escalate concerns and 'press for reconsideration' when they believe a child's needs remain unmet or when the child is failing to thrive and in need or when the child is at risk of harm.

5 Roles and Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Senior Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (SDDSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (SDDSL)

For full details of the DSL/DSL(s) roles and responsibilities please refer to [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) Part 2 and Annex C.

Our DSL/SDDSL/DSL(s) have received the appropriate safeguarding training to provide them with an understanding of their role and the knowledge and skills to carry it out. Our SDDSL/DSL(s) are trained to the same level as the DSL. Training received also supports their knowledge of the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).

This training is updated at least every two years and in addition to this they regularly (at least annually) refresh and update their knowledge and skills. The DSL is given **additional** time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out the role effectively. This is done for example through the Education Safeguarding DSL Briefings, meeting other DSLs, emails and reading statutory guidance as well as subscribing to local and national newsletters published by safeguarding and educational organisations.

Our DSL takes the **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety as well as an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place including requirements relating to the safe use and filtering of generative AI), and this is explicit in their job description.

Guidance:

[Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges](#)

[Generative AI expectations](#)

[Plan technology for your setting](#)

As part of online safety, we are aware of our responsibility for information security and access management, and we will ensure that we have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. We will take appropriate action to meet the Cyber security standards for schools and colleges in order to improve our resilience to cyber-attacks.

Guidance:

[Cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#)

[Cyber Security Training for School staff](#)

[NEN](#)

During term time, the DSL/SDDSL/DDSL is available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can delegate activities to the SDDSL/DDSL(s); however, the ultimate responsibility remains with them, and this lead responsibility is not delegated. In the absence of the DSL the SDDSL/DDSL(s) will take a lead on safeguarding with clear direction from the Senior Leadership Team.

The DSL acts as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff. Risk assessments/safety plans will be completed as required and should, where appropriate, involve other agencies, these are reviewed regularly and shared appropriately.

Our DSL maintains robust systems to monitor and record training of **all** staff and update and refresher time scales are evident within the training record. Training is delivered in-line with [StaffsSCP](#) and KCSIE 2025. This will include bulletins, briefings and inset day training as well as external events attended.

The DSL ensures that **all** staff and regular visitors have appropriate safeguarding training to equip them for their role in school. This includes training on how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information accurately. The DSL ensures that the systems are in place to induct new staff/Governors and that they are robust and monitored and any non-compliance shared with Senior Leadership Team/Governing Body.

The DSL monitors the electronic case management systems using the electronic recording software to record concerns about children, ensuring that the quality of information is accurate, proportionate, timely and assessment/referrals are made appropriately. The recording and storing of information is kept in-line with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and General Data Protection. The safeguarding and child protection records are kept in a secure location, away from academic records and there is a clear recording process of transfer, in or out, which if paper file transfer, using the transfer of records form which is signed by the sending and receiving settings and a copy of this form kept by both.

When a parent/carer chooses to remove their child/ren from school to receive Elective Home Education (EHE), the SDDSL will pass on any safeguarding concerns and the safeguarding file if there

is one, to the EHE Team within Staffordshire County Council and inform other professionals who may be involved with that child.

The DSL/SDDSL monitors the quality of safeguarding files through auditing case files regularly. Appropriate and regular supervision takes place with the DSL and may be extended to other members of staff if we deem this appropriate. The DSL and SDDSL speak daily to ensure wellbeing of staff who are directly involved in safeguarding is considered. The DSL/SDDSL will check in with staff who have been made aware of concerns which might be upsetting. All staff are aware they can speak to the DSL/SDDSL when needed and this is utilised regularly by staff.

The DSL/SDDSL will refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care, as required, and support other staff to make these referrals. We understand the importance of attending case conferences and core group meetings as well as Child in Need meetings.

The DSL will liaise with all staff (eg, pastoral staff, school nurses, attendance staff, SEN staff and Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

The DSL/SDDSL will represent school at child protection conferences and core group meetings and will be the expert within our setting to support staff in liaising with other agencies, making assessments and any referrals. Any staff member may be required to be part of strategy discussions with other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of child/ren. The DSL/SDDSL will notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation.

The DSL/SDDSL helps to promote educational outcomes by sharing appropriate information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children (including children with or who have previously had a Social Worker) are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for these children including supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make.

The DSL has a good understanding of the community the school serves, the risks and its resilience. The DSL/SDDSL attends Multi Agency meetings and Locality meetings to ensure risks are identified.

6 The Governing Body

At Cannock Chase High School our Governing Body have a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements and they must ensure that we comply with our duties under legislation. They must have regard to this guidance in ensuring policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times. See Part 2 [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#). The Headteacher ensures that the policies and procedures, adopted by the Governing Body and proprietors (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood and followed by all staff. These policies are transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, children and their parents/carers.

The Governing Body ensure that all staff, including Governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. This training should be regularly updated and in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.

This training will equip Governors and trustees with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place here are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding and this training is regularly updated.

In considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, our Governing Body will ensure that our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. They ensure that the Leadership Team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The Governing Body will review the following standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support our setting in meeting this standard:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually;
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

Guidance:

[Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges](#)

The Governing Body are also aware of their responsibility to ensure that there is the appropriate level of security protection procedures are in place in order to safeguard systems, staff and learners and that there is the need to review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate action is taken to meet the Cyber security standards for schools and colleges to improve the resilience to cyber-attacks.

Guidance:

[Cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#)

[Cyber Security Training for School staff](#)

[NEN](#)

The Governing Body and proprietors are aware of their obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#), (including the [Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty](#)), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Further guidance is found in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) & [Equality Act 2010-Advice for schools](#).

Staff, Governors and Trustees use the DfE's data protection guidance for schools to help us to:

- comply with data protection law;
- develop data policies and processes;
- know what staff and student data to keep;
- follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

The Governing Body facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding involving everyone in school, ensuring that safeguarding is at the forefront and underpins all relevant aspects of process and policy development. These systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of our children at the heart of what we do.

The Governing Body has appointed the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who takes **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring). This is explicit in their job description, and they ensure that the DSL understands their responsibility in leading safeguarding across the school. They also ensure that the DSL is given additional time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out the role effectively. See Annex C [Keepingchildrensafeineducation2025.pdf](#)

The Governing Body has also identified a Senior Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (SDDSL), who is trained to the same safeguarding standard as the DSL.

The Governing Body and proprietors ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. It is recognised that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities. There is an expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all students.

The Safeguarding Link Governors meet with the DSL at least termly and the DSL provides Termly Updates to the Governing Body as well as an Annual Impact Report.

The following is a resource: [Teaching about relationships, sex and health](#) and there are more listed in Annex B KCSIE including [Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes](#).

Our Governing Body, whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the online risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, our Governing Body and proprietors ensure that our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Governing Body and proprietors consider the age range of our children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs verses safeguarding risks.

The Governing Body will ensure compliance with the completion of the Section 175/157 safeguarding audit return, via the Phew electronic system, to the Local Authority and that any areas of concern in safeguarding are identified and a safeguarding action plan is developed.

They also ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency practice in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).

The Governing Body ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received safer recruitment training and are compliant with safer recruitment procedures. This includes the requirement for appropriate checks to be carried out in line with national guidance. When candidates have been shortlisted, they will be made aware that online searches will be carried out.

- See Part 3 Safer Recruitment [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

Our Governing Body/Headteacher have ensured that there is a current Whistleblowing Policy and staff are aware of this policy and understand its content. We have a culture where staff can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed professionally and sensitively in accordance with agreed whistleblowing procedures. The policy can be found on the school website.

Further guidance on [whistleblowing](#) is available here and the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding safeguarding failures internally. Staff can call on 0800 028 0285 and the line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

When the Governing Body or Proprietors hire/rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (e.g. community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities), they will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the Governing Body or proprietor, under the direct supervision or management of their school or college staff, their arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body, this is not necessarily the case.

The Governing Body or proprietor will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate.

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

Guidance

[Keeping Children Safe in out-of-school settings](#)

[After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers](#)

The Designated Teacher

The Governing Body has appointed a Designated Teacher (DT) who works with the Local Authority to promote the educational achievement of registered students in our setting, who are looked after. Our DT works across the school to promote and improve educational outcomes for children in care using evidence-based interventions.

Our DTs also have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care, outside of England and Wales. They are appropriately trained and have the relevant qualifications and experience.

The DT works closely with the Virtual School to provide the most appropriate support, utilising Student Premium Plus funding, to ensure that they meet the needs identified in the child's personal

education plan (PEP). They work with the Virtual School Headteacher to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children. [Designated Teacher](#).

The DT has the details of the Local Authority Personal Advisor who has been appointed to guide and support the care leaver and liaises as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

At Cannock Chase High School we are Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed and take a relational based approach to supporting our most vulnerable children and will work restoratively with children to improve their outcomes.

We are aware of the additional duties of the Virtual School Headteacher extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. We understand the role that we play in improving outcomes for children with a social worker.

[Virtual Headteacher Role-Children with a social worker](#)

7 Working with Parents/Carers

At Cannock Chase High School we are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of their children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

When new students join our school, parents/carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy and that we are an Operation Encompass setting. A copy of this policy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents/carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our safeguarding colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to the relevant local authority or other agencies.

We respect parents'/carers' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or if it is necessary to do so to safeguard a child from harm.

We will seek to share with parents/carers any concerns we may have about their child before making a referral, unless to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental/carer engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL from making a referral to the local authority in those circumstances and where it is appropriate to do so.

To keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents/carers to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- emergency contact details (if different from above) and **at least 2 contacts**;
- any legal or criminal changes which affects parental responsibility e.g. bail conditions, court orders, Special Guardianship Orders, Child Arrangement Orders etc.

The school will retain this information on the student file. The school will only share information about students with adults who have parental responsibility for a student or where a parent/carer has given permission and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing. We recognise that we are likely to be in regular contact with parents/carers. We will use these communications to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents/carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems schools use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents/carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

At Cannock Chase High School we update parents about safeguarding through social media, the school website, emails or through other electronic communication systems.

8 Early Help

Any child may benefit from early help, but all staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or County Lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from school, care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug or alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of 'honour-based' abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

The DSL ensures that all **all** staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL/SDDSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the **lead professional** in undertaking an early help assessment.

Guidance documents can be accessed via the following links:

- [SSCP Early Help](#)
- [SSCP Threshold Framework](#)

9 What Happens if a Referral is Deemed Necessary to Escalate Beyond Early Help

Child in Need (Section 17)

If the DSL considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a Child in Need referral is appropriate, they will speak with parents/child and obtain their consent for referral to local/appropriate authority children's social care to request an assessment. If parents refuse to give consent, but the child's needs are still not being met, the DSL may feel that a referral is still appropriate and will discuss these concerns with the local authority children's social care. Appropriate staff will attend Child in Need (CIN) meetings convened by Children's Social Care when children are deemed to require Section 17 services.

Child Protection (Section 47)

If the local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, they make enquires under Section 47 to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an Emergency Protection Order (under S44 of the Children Act 1989) or in Police Protective Custody (under S46 of the Children Act 1989).

Child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved and will work in an open, honest, and transparent way with any parent whose child has been referred to children's social care or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children, and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents/carers wherever possible.

10 Escalation Process

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership expects members of staff working directly with families to share information appropriately and work to plans agreed in all relevant forums. Good practice includes the expectation that constructive challenge amongst colleagues within agencies, and between agencies, provides a healthy approach to the work.

This process will be kept as simple as possible, and the aim will be to resolve difficulties at a professional practitioner level, wherever possible, and always in a restorative way. We recognise that differences in status and experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this course of action and support should be sought from the DSL/SDDSL.

If we believe that concerns regarding a child are not being addressed and outcomes are not improving, we understand the expectations that we will escalate our concerns in line with the SSCP Escalation Policy outcome.

Where local authority children's social care has concluded that an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is **not** required but professionals in other agencies remain seriously concerned about the safety of a child, these professionals should seek further discussion with the local authority children's social worker, their manager and/or the designated safeguarding professional lead. The concerns, discussion and any agreements made should be recorded in each agency's files.

If concerns remain, the professional should discuss with their designated lead person or senior manager in their agency. If concerns remain professionals may formally request that local authority children's social care convene an ICPC.

Local authority children's social care should convene a conference where one or more professionals, supported by a senior manager/named or designated professional requests one. If disagreement continues, Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership's escalation procedures should be followed.

11 A Safer School Culture

Safer Recruitment and Selection

At Cannock Chase High School we pay full regard to [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#). Our Safer Recruitment and Selection practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, checking academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks, prohibition checks (whether they are known to the police and/or social care), if they have been disqualified from providing childcare and any relevant overseas information. Evidence of these checks is recorded on our Single Central Record. The DSL will check the SRC alongside the School Business Manager termly.

Staff who have lived or worked outside the UK will undergo the same checks as all other staff, even if they have never been to the UK. We will ensure that any other appropriate checks are carried out so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include criminal records checks for overseas applicants and for teaching positions obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach.

Guidance Documents:

- [Application process for criminal records checks overseas](#)
- [Regulated professions database](#)

Separate barred list checks are only be carried out in the following circumstances:

- for newly appointed staff who are engaging in regulated activity, pending the receipt of an Enhanced Certificate with Barred List information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (and where all other relevant checks have been carried out); or
- where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation (and where all other relevant checks as above have been carried out).

All recruitment materials will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of students.

Relevant staff have undertaken appropriate training in Safer Recruitment.

One of the trained safer recruitment staff will be involved in **all** staff and volunteer recruitment processes and sit on the recruitment panel. A member(s) of the Governing Body has received Safer Recruitment training.

Induction

All staff will be made aware of the systems we have in place to support safeguarding. These are explained as part of staff induction including:

- The Safeguarding policy;
- The Behaviour Policy;
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy;
- The Staff Code of Conduct;
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- The role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies);
- At least part one of KCSIE 2024.

If staff, supply staff, visitors, volunteers or parent/carer helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff.

Consideration should be given to:

- informing another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long.
- doors having a clear glass panel in them and where possible be left open.

No volunteers and parent helpers will be left unsupervised with children or out of sight of the teacher or member of staff in charge. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure this is the case.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

Use of Reasonable Force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff ~~in school~~ to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom. Departmental advice for schools is available [here](#) or on the DfE website (Use of Reasonable Force document).

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children including any with SEN or disabilities, or with medical conditions, staff should consider the risks carefully.

By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance by drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children and agreeing them with parents/carers, we will reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force. All of these incidents will be appropriately recorded.

12 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 – Specific Safeguarding Issues

All staff have an awareness of the following safeguarding issues through regular training and briefings. Staff are aware that these behaviours can make children vulnerable and put them in danger and that often these issues overlap. Please read and refer to Appendix 2 for additional information and guidance on the below topics.

- Abuse (incl Physical/Emotional/Sexual/Neglect/Exploitation) Annex 1
- Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Child-on-Child abuse (inc sexual violence and sexual harassment/sexting – sharing of nude/semi-nude images & upskirting)
- Children and the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children who are absent from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness and Perplexing Presentations
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Prevent Duty and Channel
- Serious violence
- Trafficking

For further information, advice and guidance on these issues please see Annex 2 of this document.

13 Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

All children should be protected however our staff and Governing Body recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others. This list is not exhaustive but highlights some of these groups:

- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need & Child Protection);
- Children who are absent from education;
- Children who are Elective Home Education (EHE);
- Children requiring mental health support;
- Looked after children (LAC) and previously looked after children (PLAC) and care leavers.
- Children with special educational needs & disabilities/health issues;
- Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT).
- Children who are young carers
- Children who are affected by parental conflict and/or domestic abuse
- Children who are refugees or asylum seekers
- Children vulnerable to/at risk of/involved in CSE/CCE

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 explains in more detail about these groups. We support these groups by the following.

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them.
- **Understanding and action:** to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent, rather than not.
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments, decisions and how they have been reached, positive or negative.
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy, to assist them in putting forward their views.

Alternative Provision

At Cannock Chase High School we know that the cohort of students in our provision often have complex needs, our Governing Body is aware of this additional risk of harm to which our students may be vulnerable to.

The DfE 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, including knowing where the child will be based during school hours. We will ensure that regular reviews of the provision take place frequently (at least half termly) to ensure the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs.

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

- Alternative Provision-DfE Statutory Guidance
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school-DfE Statutory Guidance

14 Educational Visitors to School

We will undertake risk assessment and use professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so we will consider:

- what we know about the individual/company, including formal and informal information offered by staff, parents/carers, other establishments or volunteers;
- whether the individual/company has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where references can be advised and suitability recorded;
- whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check;
- we will clearly have decided the level of supervision required through risk assessment – the supervision will be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children” as stated in KCSIE 2025.

We have clear visitor’s procedure that enables us to offer student experiences of meeting other professionals to extend knowledge and curriculum. This clearly states whether they are supervised or unsupervised within the school.

15 Allegations Made Against/Concerns Raised in Relation to Teachers, Including Supply Teachers, Other Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment securing wellbeing and best possible outcomes for the children at our school. We take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults who work at Cannock Chase High School are safe to work with children. However, we do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

The Governing Body ensures that there are procedures in place for dealing with the two sections covering two levels (see below) of concern and/or allegations against staff members, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.

- Allegations that **may** meet the harms threshold.
- Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold, referred to for the purposes of this guidance as ‘**low level concerns**’.

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

We have a good understanding and give due regard to Part 4 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) guidance and [SSCB Allegations of abuse made against a person working with children](#) where it is alleged that anyone working in our education setting providing education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors 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.

This relates to members of staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors, who are currently working in any education setting, regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and/or historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We understand that if we are not the employer of an individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately. In no circumstances will we decide 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. Our Governing Body will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works at our school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher immediately. If it is about the sole proprietor of the independent school, then this needs to be raised with the Designated Officer. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chair of the Governing Body. If neither the Headteacher nor Chair of Governing Body is contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Headteacher or the Vice Chair of Governors.

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. No member of staff or the Governing Body will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

Referrals to LADO in Staffordshire are made via the [LADO Referral form](#)

Learning Lessons

It is important that lessons are learnt when managing all levels and types of allegations.

The Headteacher/case manager at Cannock Chase High School will review the circumstances of all substantiated cases with Staffordshire's LADO to determine whether improvements can be made to the school's procedures to help prevent similar events in the future. This will be done throughout the entirety of the process and at conclusion.

Lessons will also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and case manager will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Where an allegation is concluded to be either unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated the headteacher/case manager (and if they have been involved the LADO) will consider the facts of each case and determine whether any lessons can be learned, and improvements made.

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low level concerns'.

At Cannock Chase High School we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimising the risk of abuse and

ensuring that adults who work in or on behalf of our school are clear about professional boundaries and act within them in accordance with our ethos and values.

What is a low-level concern?

Low level does not mean that the concern is insignificant. It is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or nagging doubt that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is:

- inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

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

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- humiliating students.

All staff have a good understanding of what constitutes a low-level concern and our Governing Body ensure that these low-level concerns are included as part of our Staff Code of Conduct and safeguarding policies as set out in Part two of KCSiE 2025.

All low-level concerns should be reported to the DSL who will ensure that the Headteacher will be made aware of all low-level concerns. Staff should report these concerns using the 'Record of Low Level Concern Regarding Staff' proforma and return this to the DSL immediately.

Sharing Low-Level Concerns

We understand how crucial it is that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working in or on behalf of our setting from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

If we are in any doubt as to whether information shared about a member of our staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harms threshold we will consult with the LADO.

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors knows to contact the LADO via the LADO referral form.

The school has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR. The DSL has a responsibility to inform the Barring service.

16 Information Sharing

We work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) and [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#).

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs our Governing Body recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This includes ensuring arrangements are in place to set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within our setting and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required.

We are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

Our Governing Body are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. Our Governing Body/proprietors/management committees ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR.

Where children leave our setting, the DSL will ensure that any relevant Safeguarding file is transferred to the new setting as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, with confirmation of receipt.

In addition to the safeguarding file, our DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school/college in advance of the child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new setting to continue supporting the children of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Guidance documents:

- [Data Protection: Toolkit for schools](#)

17 Managing Complaints

In line with our school ethos and culture, we encourage children and parents/carers to talk to us if they are unhappy with anything to do with our setting. We have a robust internal investigation process.

Our complaints policy states clearly the various stages of complaint and where to escalate concerns following completion and outcome of our complaints process. Our complaints policy is available on our website for parents/carers and is also available on request.

Safeguarding concerns should be raised with school immediately. If a concern means a child is at immediate risk, we will contact the local authority children's social care based on where the child resides. All visitors are given safeguarding information which outlines how to share concerns and code of conduct expected by visitors/contractors.

18 Site Security

At Cannock Chase High School we understand the importance of site security which is controlled by precise management directives, but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. All people on our site must adhere to the rules which govern it. Laxity can cause potential problems with safeguarding, therefore:

- gates are kept closed during the school day, visitors gain access through the main entrance;
- visitors and volunteers must only enter through the main entrance and, after signing in at the office, will be issued with a school lanyard and visitor's pass;
- students must only enter through the main entrance and sign in;
- school has a clear system of ensuring staff are accompanied/supervised by regulated staff member;
- any visitor on site who is not identifiable by a visitor's pass will be challenged by any staff member and this will be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team;
- parents/carers and grandparents attending functions have access only through the designated and supervised entrances, with tickets/invites for visitors for appropriate school events;
- children will only be allowed home during the school day with adults with parental responsibility or confirmed permission;
- empty classrooms should have closed windows and doors;
- children should never be allowed to leave school alone during school hours unless collected by or given permission to leave by an adult such as a parent/carers who is doing so for a valid reason, they should report to reception to do this;
- a number of staff are always on duty at break times;
- a health and safety audit are completed annually with risk assessment/safety planning and forms part of the Governors' annual report, this will include a fire evacuation and prevent risk assessment;
- the risk management of site security is managed by senior leaders/Governors and we have a clear system of risk assessments and review timescales of these.

Guidance

- [School and college security - GOV.UK](#)

Last review date:	Next Review date:	Statutory Policy:
September 2025	September 2026	Yes

Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

1. Neglect is 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 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 caregivers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger.
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food.
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness.
- Frequently dirty or unkempt.
- Often poorly or inappropriately dressed for the weather.
- Poor school attendance or often late for school.
- Not being brought to school
- Poor concentration.
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour.
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated.
- Not being taken to medical appointments
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight.
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially.
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings.
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.
- Adolescent neglect
- Affluent neglect

2. Physical Abuse is 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.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;
- bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;
- bite marks;
- round burn marks;
- multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;
- an injury that is not consistent with the account given;

- changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;
- bald patches;
- symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;
- unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;
- fear of going home or parents being contacted;
- fear of medical help;
- fear of changing for PE;
- inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;
- violence or aggression towards others including bullying;
- isolation from peers.

3. 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.

The following may be signs and indicators of child sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist but if we suspect that a child is a victim of child sexual abuse, we will refer to and/or use the resources on the [CSA Centre](#))

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge;
- anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching;
- reluctance to go home;
- inability to concentrate, tiredness;
- refusal to communicate;
- thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains;
- eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia;
- attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse;
- aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation;
- unusual compliance;
- regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling;
- frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately;
- depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group;
- reluctance to undress for PE or swimming;
- bruises or scratches in the genital area.

4. Emotional Abuse is 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 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 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.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- the child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;
- over-reaction to mistakes;
- delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- sudden speech or sensory disorders;
- inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;
- self-harming, drug or solvent abuse;
- fear of parents being contacted;
- running away;
- compulsive stealing;
- appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia;
- soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

NB: Some situations where children stop communicating suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment.

Parental Response

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents/carers may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed;
- unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development;
- reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries;
- frequent presentation of minor injuries;
- a persistently negative attitude towards the child;
- unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child;
- alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse;
- parents request removal of the child from home;
- violence between adults in the household;
- evidence of coercion and control.

Disabled Children

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- a bruise in a site that may not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, maybe of concern on a non-mobile child;
- not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment;
- poor toileting arrangements;

- lack of stimulation;
- unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint;
- rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries;
- unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication;
- ill-fitting equipment, for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- misappropriation of a child's finances;
- inappropriate invasive procedures.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Behaviours Linked to Safeguarding Issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Presenting behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including the link to County Lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Bullying, including Cyberbullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period, where it is difficult for those bullied to protect themselves. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft);
- verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling);
- emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group);
- cyberbullying (including sexting).

Guidance Documents:

- [Preventing & tackling bullying](#)
- [Cyberbullying advice](#)

Children Missing Education

All professionals working with children, as well as the wider community can help by remaining vigilant to children's safety. The law states every child should be receiving an education and we stand a better chance of ensuring a child's safety if we know where and how they are receiving this. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area; we work closely to ensure we put appropriate safeguarding responses in place for children who go missing from education. The attendance policy can be found [here](#) or on the school website.

A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, substance abuse and other issues. Using professional curiosity to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

We understand our responsibility to link school absence/missing episodes with the impact this has on the child's education. We know that there is a distinction between a child being absent and when they are subject to a missing episode and the importance of acting on this information and reporting a missing episode when appropriate. We have a key role in sharing information with the police and any lead practitioner involved with the family when a child is reported missing. We will provide, when required, an appropriate environment for a Return Home Interview (RHI) within the education setting, where possible and will contribute to safety planning when required. We will follow our attendance policy for children who are regularly and persistently absent.

If a child is not known to the Local Authority or other agencies but there are remaining safeguarding concerns, we will consult the SSCP Threshold Framework and ensure that any concerns are reported to the appropriate agencies/partners.

Our school holds **at least 2** emergency contact numbers for each student. If a child goes missing from our school and we are unable to locate them, we will inform parents/carers and we will also contact the Police to report them missing. This will ensure that the Police and other partners have a true picture of missing episodes, which are indicators of risk for some children.

The school policies are clear regarding children going missing from the school site and that ALL staff are aware of the processes and the role that they ALL play in this. In particular the importance of the completing class registers at the earliest opportunities.

The school will notify the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 20 days or more. The school (regardless of designation) will also notify the Local Authority of any student who is to be deleted from the admission register because s/he:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system (e.g. elective home education);
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which s/he is registered (moved within the city, within the country or moved abroad but failed to notify the school of the change);
- displaced because of a crisis e.g. domestic violence or homelessness;
- has been certified by a medical as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither s/he nor his/her parent/carer has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe that s/he will return to the school at the end of that period;
- has been permanently excluded.

Our school will demonstrate that we have made reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered 'missing'. See "Children Missing education" on the DfE website. [Children missing education guidance - August 2024.pdf](#)

Children Who Are Absent from Education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeated occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important that the school or college's response to persistently absent students and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent students, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Further information and support, includes:

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.
- Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children missing education](#).
- Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time enrolment of 14 to 16-year-olds in further education and sixth-form colleges](#)

Child Missing from Home or Care

There are strong links between children involved in criminal and sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home, care or school, bullying, self-harm, teenage pregnancy, truancy and substance misuse.

In addition, some children are particularly vulnerable, for example, children with special needs, those in residential or foster care, those leaving care, migrant children, particularly those who are unaccompanied, those forced into marriage, those involved in gangs and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Most children who go missing are not in care and go missing from their family home. However, children who are looked after are much more likely to run away than those who live at home and over 50% of young people in care have run away at some point.

Guidance document:

- [Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

The DSL and DDSL are aware and regularly use the Staffordshire Risk Factor Matrix which serves as a tool to identify level of risk and indicator of risk of CSE and CCE. Professional judgment can be used to override the level of risk indicated on the tool. The Risk Factor Matrix is then sent to the Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) team. The DSL attends all Cannock MACE Panel meetings.

We are aware of the [Child Exploitation Risk Screening Tool](#) and use this at the earliest opportunity to understand the risk factors in a child's life.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through County Lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing.

They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm, from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however, professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

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;
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Guidance documents:

- [Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked](#)
- [Child Exploitation - StaffsSCB](#)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

The above CCE indicators can also be signs of CSE, as can having older boyfriends or girlfriends and/or suffering from sexually transmitted infections/becoming pregnant.

Guidance documents:

- [Child Sexual Exploitation Definition & Guidance](#)

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 (within the UK), 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/or 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 several locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, student 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 Mechanism (NRM) should be considered. Further information can be found here [National Referral Mechanism](#).

If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in County Lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of County Lines exploitation.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, County Lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources.

Guidance Documents:

- [Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults; County Lines](#)
- [County Lines toolkit](#)

Domestic Abuse including Operation Encompass

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial;
- emotional.

Children living in households where domestic abuse takes place should be considered and treated as victims domestic abuse. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people, can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. We will signpost and support our children/young people.

We are an Operation Encompass school and act appropriately when we receive an alert to support the children in our school.

Operation Encompass

Our DSL/DDSL has completed the National Operation Encompass training and therefore we are an Operation Encompass setting. This enables police and education settings to work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. It ensures that we have up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

If you require further information in relation to Operation Encompass, please use this link below [Operation Encompass](#)

Guidance Documents:

- [NSPCC-Domestic Abuse](#)
- [Refuge-Domestic abuse & effects on children](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support](#)
- Operation Encompass helpline 0204 513 9990 (8am-1pm Mon-Fri)

Drugs

There is evidence that children and young people are increasingly misusing alcohol and illegal drugs. Consequences range from non-attendance and poor attainment at school, poor health, committing crime to support 'habits' and increased risk of being a victim of violent crime and criminal exploitation, including sexual exploitation.

Guidance Documents:

- [NSPCC-Parental Substance Misuse](#)
- [Drugs Advise for Schools](#)

Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)

Fabricated or Induced Illness is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of their carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

There may be several explanations for these circumstances, and each requires careful consideration and review. Concerns about a child's health should be discussed with a health professional who is involved with the child.

Guidance Documents:

In Staffordshire we use the following guidance

- [FII-PP Pathway](#)
- [NHS-Overview-Fabricated or Induced Illness](#)

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL/DDSL are aware of local contact details and referral routes into local housing organisations, so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Indicators of risk include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this will **not** replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

We also recognise that in some cases 16/17 yr olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians and they will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people, and the DSL will ensure that appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Honour-Based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors, when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered HBA.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. It is known by several names including "cutting", "female circumcision" or "initiation". The term female circumcision suggests that the practice is like male circumcision, but it bears no resemblance to male circumcision, and it has serious health consequences with no medical benefits. FGM is also linked to domestic abuse, particularly in relation to "honour-based abuse".

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers

along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either via disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It is rare to see visual evidence and children should not be examined but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Staff **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless there is good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL (or deputy) and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where staff do not discover that FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, staff will follow local safeguarding procedures.

Guidance Documents:

- [Multi Agency Statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one, entered, **without** the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter a marriage. The threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Some perpetrators use perceived culture practices, to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

There are some significant differences between the referral of a concern about a young person being forced into marriage and other child protection referrals. Professionals must be aware that sharing information with a young person’s parents/carers, extended family or members of their community, could put the young person in a situation of significant risk.

Any disclosure that indicates a young person may be facing a forced marriage must be taken seriously by professionals who should also realise that this could be ‘one chance to save a life’. A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure. In cases of vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

From February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit for advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

Guidance Documents:

- [Forced Marriage](#)
- [The right to choose: Government guidance on forced marriage](#)

Mental Health

All staff have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and 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. We have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. Staff report all concerns about emotional and mental wellbeing via the school online electronic reporting system.

At Cannock Chase High School we work closely with the NHS Mental Health Support Team (MHST). Referral are made to the MHST via the Mental Health Lead and are discussed at a weekly consultation with the MHST links.

The school also fund 2 days a week of one to one counselling through Your Emotional Support Services. This is accessed through the Mental Health Lead.

Only appropriately trained professionals will attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to **observe** children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

Guidance and helpful documents:

- [Addressing Trauma and Adversity](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#)
- [Every Interaction Matters](#)
- [MIND-Parenting Capacity and Mental Health](#)
- [NSPCC-Mental Health and Parenting](#)
- [Guidance for education settings responding to a sudden unexpected death being treated as a suicide](#)

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy and by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, radicalisation, sextortion, sexual predation and technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

At Cannock Chase High School we realise that it is essential for our children to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an effective whole school approach to online safety which empowers us to protect and educate students and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms for us to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable but can be categorised into four areas of risk.

- **Content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example: making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- **Commerce**: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If you feel your students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

We ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. We consider online safety in other relevant policies, when planning curriculum, teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement. We have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place on school devices and school networks, and these are regulated and risk assessed as part of the prevent duty.

Our filtering and monitoring standards will:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually;
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

The Governing Body will review the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support schools and colleges in meeting this standard.

We have an [online safety policy](#) which identifies the usage and expected behaviour of children/students. As a school we appreciate the value of technology and that appropriate filters are in place, yet this does not lead to unreasonable restrictions which would limit online teaching and safeguarding.

Education at home/remote learning: Where children are being asked to learn online at home, our school will refer to and use the links and resources provided by the DfE – Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers and safeguarding in remote education.

Students are taught about online safety throughout their time at Cannock Chase High School within PHSE. Topics are interleaved and tailored to the needs of each year group. This is reviewed by the

PHSE lead and DSL to ensure that the PHSE curriculum meets the needs of the school. There is also a particular focus on Online safety in Year 7 during the first term of during computing lessons.

We use Securus monitoring software to ensure that students are safe, this is checked by the DSL / SDDSL weekly. Where concern have been identified concerns are recorded and managed by the DSL/SDDSL.

Please see our online safety policy for further information.

Guidance Documents:

- [Children's Commissioner-Online Safety](#)
- [Teaching online safety in education settings](#)
- [Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring](#)
- [CEOP-Safety Centre](#)
- [National Cyber Security Centre](#)
- [NSPCC-Undertaking remote teaching safely](#)
- [360 Degree Safe - Online Safety Review Tool](#)
- [UKCCIS-UK Council for Child Internet Safety](#)

Private Fostering

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 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more it is categorised as private fostering.

Close relatives are defined as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or a stepparent.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- children who need alternative care because of parental illness;
- children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours;
- children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities;
- unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children;
- teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents;
- children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

Our staff at Cannock Chase High School will notify the DSL/SDDSL when they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. There is a mandatory duty on the school to inform Staffordshire Children's Social Care of a private fostering arrangement by contacting (0800 1313126), who then have a duty to check that the young person is being properly cared for and that the arrangement is satisfactory.

Guidance Document:

- [Children Act 1989 – Private Fostering](#)
- [What is Private Fostering? | Foster For Staffordshire](#)

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a school's safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the Government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

At Cannock Chase High School we value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Students and school staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Cannock Chase High School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's safeguarding duty.

The school's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputy) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Definitions of radicalisation, extremism and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in

Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as follows.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
- undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results the above points
- We are aware the types of behaviours that are indicative of the kind of promotion or advancement relevant to the definition and are an important guide to its application. [New definition of extremism \(2024\) - GOV.UK](#)

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”, those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Students may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors – it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include the following.

- Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Crisis – the student may be experiencing family tensions, a sense of isolation and low self-esteem, they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends, they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration, local community tensions and events affecting the student's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the student may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure or rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment and poor resettlement/reintegration.
- Special Educational Need –students may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all children experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- family members convicted of a terrorism act or subject to a Channel intervention;
- accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- joining or seeking to join extremist organisations;
- significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;
- experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

Prevent Duty

The school Governors, the Headteacher and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE/PSHSE curriculum, SEND policy, Assemblies rota, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

All schools are subject to a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism". This is known as The Prevent Duty and is part of our schools wider safeguarding obligations.

Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales. We follow the guidance in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies.

Our school has a Prevent Lead who is the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the DSL.

Our School will monitor online activity within the school to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessed by students or staff. This is best done using specialist online monitoring software.

Guidance Documents:

- [The Prevent Duty.](#)
- [Educate Against Hate](#)
- [ACT Early | Prevent radicalisation](#)

Serious Youth Violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Guidance Documents:

- [Home Office Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement](#)
- [Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults; County Lines](#)

Useful Safeguarding Contacts

- Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice Service (ESAS) on 01785 895836 email: esas@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer – all referrals via form Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD) 0300 111 8007
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 111 8007
- Emergency Duty Services (EDS- safeguarding concerns) 0345 604 2886 or email eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Staffordshire Police Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via 101, in an emergency please dial 999
- Stoke-on-Trent Children's Services: Chat and Advice Service (CHAD) 01782 235100 Emergency Duty Team: 01782 234234 (outside office hours)
- Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email prevent@staffordshire.police.uk
- NSPCC– 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000 NSPCC Staffs School contacts rachel.willis@nspcc.org.uk & Matthew.Harding@nspcc.org.uk
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH) 0344 3814772. Email helpline@saferinternet.org.uk

Local Advice

- New Era - Domestic violence support team
- Fostering Service (Staffordshire) 0800 169 2061 email fostering&adoptionbus@staffordshire.gov.uk Out of Hours: Emergency Duty Service 01785 354030
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board StaffsSCB
- Entrust HR Services (subscription basis) 01785 278961
- Fostering Service (Stoke-on-Trent) 01782 234555 Email: fostering@stoke.gov.uk
- Stoke-on-Trent Family Information Service Hub (F.I.S.H) 01782 232200 email fish@stoke.gov.uk
- Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email prevent@staffordshire.police.uk
- PHSE Coordinator Natalie McGrath natalie@staffscvys.org.uk
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre [CEOP](https://www.ceop.gov.uk)

Useful Safeguarding links

NSPCC

- [Harmful sexual behaviour \(HSB\) NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Keeping children safe online-online safety/sexting/sending nudes](#)

National Contacts

- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) [CEOP Safety Centre](https://www.ceop.gov.uk)
- Women's Aid - 24 Hour Helpline: 0870 2700 123
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline – 0844 381 4772 [Safer Internet Helpline](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) – [Internet Watch Foundation](https://www.iwf.org.uk)
- Safer Internet Centre – helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
- Childline – 0800 1111 [Childline](https://www.childline.gov.uk)

- HM Government (advice on protecting children from radicalisation for parents, teachers, and leaders) www.educateagainsthate.com
- NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour project: **0844 892 0273**
- Ofsted General enquiries: 0300 123 1231
- About Schools: 0300 123 4234
- Concerns: 0300 123 4666
- e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Useful Websites

- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board <https://www.staffsscp.org.uk/>
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) – [Ceop-Police](#) & [knowaboutcse](#)
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline – 0844 381 4772 [Safer Internet Helpline](#)
- NSPCC – 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000 [NSPCC](#)
- [Stop It Now! child sexual abuse helpline](#)
- Women's Aid - 24 Hour Helpline: 0870 2700 123
- UNICEF – Support Care Team 0300 330 5580 (Mon – Fri 8am-6pm). If you think a child is in immediate danger, please call 999. [Unicef](#)
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) – [Internet Watch Foundation](#)
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline – 0844 381 4772 [Safer Internet Helpline](#)