CANNOCK CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

Safeguarding Policy 2026

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 2026

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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 Lucie Murdoch	Level 3
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Mrs Caroline Mills	Level 3
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding	Mrs Claire Aldridge	Level 3
Chair of Governors	Mrs Claire Aldridge	Level 3
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Mrs Jill Simpson	Level 3
Mental Health Lead	Mrs Lucie Murdoch	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 practice 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 (2026) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 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**;
- 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 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026).

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 the KCSIE 2026 guidance.

All staff who work directly with children, are provided with, and have read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

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 2026 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 is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), and the Maintained schools: governance guide. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local **safeguarding partners.**

Part 3 of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school.

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and The Crime and Policing Act 2026), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their students with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a specific group of students (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve student outcomes. Some students may be more at risk of harm from issues such as: sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination.
- Operation Encompass statutory guidance, which explains that the police must notify our school of any incidents involving domestic abuse.

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 Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

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

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

Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes is where children share nude or semi-nude images, such as photographs, videos or live streams. This also includes images that are digitally altered or wholly AI-generated (sometimes called 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes') that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video. The sharing of nude or semi-nude images requires a safeguarding response whether they are consensual or non-consensual.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

- the local authority (LA);
- integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA;
- the chief officer of police for an area in the LA area.

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

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

5 Equality Statement

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see Section 10);
- are young carers;
- may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- have English as an additional language (EAL);
- are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalization;
- are asylum seekers;
- are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs;
- are looked after or previously looked after (see Section 14);
- are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or frequently;

- whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

6 The Role of All Staff in Keeping Children Safe

All staff have read and have a good understanding of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have read and reviewed the guidance 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 will be aware of:

- our systems that support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education/who are absent from education;
- be aware of the school's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures;
- the early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment;
- the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play;
- the process for community-based Family Help assessments;
- what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals;
- the signs of different types of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).

The safeguarding issues that often overlap and can put children at risk of harm, including:

- drug taking and/or alcohol misuse;
- unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education;
- serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalization;
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes;
- new and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm;
- the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe;
- the fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online;
- the fact that mental health can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation;

- that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay or bisexual can be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying;
- the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender;
- that a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time;
- what to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

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 – lite bites as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide our staff with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff provide a safe space for students who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.

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 nude or semi-nude 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.

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

- Behaviour Policy;
- pastoral support system;
- planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
    - healthy and respectful relationships;
    - boundaries and consent;
    - stereotyping, prejudice and equality;
    - body confidence and self-esteem;
    - how to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour);
    - the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support;
    - what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.

7 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/DDSL roles and responsibilities please refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 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/DDSL(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 (2026)

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 at least once every academic year by the DSL 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 SDDS/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 2026. 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.

8 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. 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 2026 & 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.

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 A 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 2026

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

9 Confidentiality

Cannock Chase High School recognises that **timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding**. The school will share information appropriately and lawfully where this is necessary to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Information will be handled in accordance with the **UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025**, together with relevant statutory safeguarding guidance and the school's data protection arrangements. Data protection legislation does not prevent information being shared where this is necessary for safeguarding.

Safeguarding information will be shared on a **need-to-know basis** and only with those who require it to safeguard or support a child. Staff must:

- keep safeguarding information confidential and secure;
- share concerns promptly with the DSL or Deputy DSL;
- seek advice where they are unsure whether information should be shared;
- understand that concerns about data protection must not prevent necessary safeguarding action.

Staff must **never promise a child that information will be kept secret**. Children should be told sensitively that information may need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.

Information sharing: The school will have arrangements for sharing relevant information within the school and, where required, with **local authority children's social care, the police, health services, the three safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies and practitioners**.

Information will be shared where necessary to:

- protect a child from harm;
- make or support a safeguarding referral;
- respond to immediate risks;
- support multi-agency assessments or investigations; or
- fulfil statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

Consent is not always required to share safeguarding information. Where special category personal data is involved, the relevant lawful conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 will be considered. **Fear or uncertainty about data protection must not delay action needed to protect a child.**

Significant information-sharing decisions will be recorded, including what was shared, with whom, when and why.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Where a child reports sexual violence or sexual harassment, the DSL will consider the child's wishes alongside the school's duty to protect the victim and other children.

Parents/carers will normally be informed unless doing so would place the child at greater risk or prejudice safeguarding action. Where a child is at risk of harm, in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral to children's social care will be made where appropriate.

Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault should be referred to the police, including where the alleged perpetrator is under 10, although the response will take account of the circumstances and welfare of the children involved.

Staff responsibilities

All staff are responsible for sharing safeguarding concerns without delay. Staff must not assume that someone else will pass on information that may be important to keeping a child safe.

The DSL is responsible for overseeing safeguarding information sharing and ensuring that the school's arrangements comply with legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

Anonymity, Witness Support and the Criminal Process

Where a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, staff will be mindful of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process.

The school will do all it reasonably can to protect the anonymity of children involved. This includes carefully considering which staff need to know about the report and what information needs to be shared to provide appropriate support.

Staff will consider the potential impact of social media and online communication in spreading rumours or exposing the identities of victims and other children involved.

Information Sharing Guidance

Staff should follow the seven golden rules contained within the government's *Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners* when making decisions about sharing information.

If staff are in any doubt about whether information should be shared, they should speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL without delay.

Transfer of Child Protection Records

When a child leaves the school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is transferred securely to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term.

The DSL will consider whether it is appropriate to share relevant safeguarding information with the new school or college in advance of the child leaving, where this is necessary to support their safety and welfare.

10 Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- has a disability 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 (EHC) plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves;
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours;
- is bereaved;
- is showing early signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home;
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of permanent exclusion and in alternative provision or a student referral unit;
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism;
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol;
- has returned home to their family from care;

- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage;
- is a privately fostered child,

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

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.** Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

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

If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

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

Bear in mind that some children may:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Any teacher who either:

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

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

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

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

Figure 1 below, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

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

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

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate. Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Early help assessment

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

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

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

Referral

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

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority should make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person

who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.
If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.
https://www.staffsscp.org.uk/sscp-escalation-policy/

If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

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

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

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

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:
- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

If you have a concern about mental health

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.

Mental health problems can also, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns (for example, self-harm).

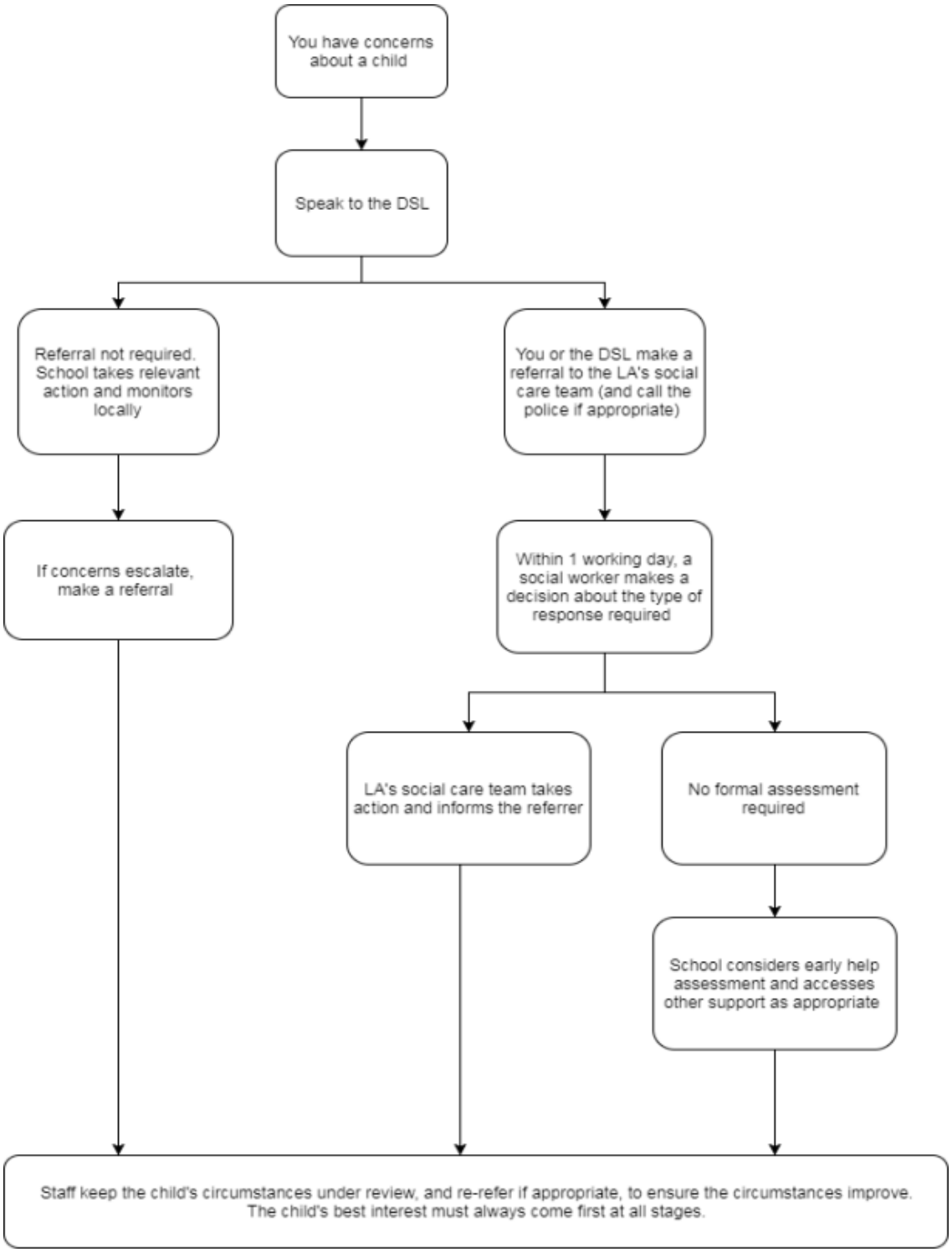
Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise, including:
- Significant changes in behaviour,
- Ongoing difficulty sleeping
- Withdrawing from social situations
- Not wanting to do things they usually like
- Physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action. If you feel that a child is in danger, call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by their parent or other suitable person.

If the child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

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

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



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

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

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

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

Allegations of abuse made against other students

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up", or "boys being boys", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, misogyny/misandry and an unsafe environment for students. For some (but not all) forms of child-on-child abuse it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;
- could put students in the school at risk;
- is violent;
- involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol;
- involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI), which may include or be driven by misogyny/misandry.

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

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

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

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any

disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting, making or sending sexual images;
- be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female students, and initiation or hazing-type violence with respect to boys;
- ensure our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent;
- ensure students are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems;
- ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously;
- be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners;
- recognise the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. We will actively identify, challenge and address how misogynistic/misandrist attitudes contribute to the normalisation of inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, within our school environment;
- be alert to the prevalence of harmful online material and extreme misogynistic/misandrist ideologies, including misogynistic influencers, and recognise the impact this content could have on shaping students' attitudes;
- support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. we will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed;
- consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment;
- ensure staff are trained to understand:
    - how to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
    - that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
    - that if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. for example:
        - children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to;
        - a friend may make a report;
        - a member of staff may overhear a conversation;
        - a child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong;
    - that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
    - that a student harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy;
    - the important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it;

- that they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns;
- that social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side;
- that exposure to misogynistic/misandrist content online can indicate a safeguarding concern and requires early discussion with the DSL.

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

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

- taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this;
- there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

Making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual, require a safeguarding response. If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nude or semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

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

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

Initial review meeting

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

- whether there is an immediate risk to student(s);
- if a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care;

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

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

- the incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident. see appendix 4 for more information on assessing adult-involved incidents;
- there is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to their SEN);
- what the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent;
- the imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the images or videos is under 13;
- the DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

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

Further review by the DSL

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

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

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

Informing parents/carers

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through the DSL who will contact the police locally or by calling 999.

Recording incidents

All incidents of making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 18 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

Students are taught about the issues surrounding the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our PSHE programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- what it is;
- how it is most likely to be encountered;
- the consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment. This also includes making such images, including where generated by AI;
- issues of legality;
- the risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation;
- students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
    - specific requests or pressure to make, provide (or forward) such images;
    - the receipt of such images.

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

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- putting safeguarding first;
- approaching from the perspective of the child;
- promoting dialogue and understanding;
- empowering and enabling children and young people;
- never frightening or scare-mongering;
- challenging victim-blaming attitudes.

Reporting systems for our students

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- put systems in place for students to confidently report abuse;
- ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for students;
- make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

Safeguarding Reporting and Support

Cannock Chase High School has **a** large team of trained safeguarding leads and pastoral staff who are available to support students and respond to safeguarding concerns. All staff receive Level 1 safeguarding training, ensuring that they understand their responsibility to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding concerns.

Students are encouraged to speak to any trusted member of staff if they have a concern about themselves or another student. In addition, the school website provides a **'**Report It' button, which enables students to report a safeguarding or welfare concern confidentially.

Students are regularly reminded of these reporting routes through assemblies, tutor time, PSHE/RSHE lessons and other safeguarding activities. The school aims to ensure that all students know where to go for help and feel confident that concerns will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

11 Online Safety and The Use of Mobile Technology

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors;
- protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones');
- set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community, including the expectation that our school is a mobile phone-free environment by default;
- establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

The 4 key categories of risk

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

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories;
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;
- **Conduct** – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images including those generated using AI and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

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

Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- the safe use of social media, the internet and technology;
- keeping personal information private;
- how to recognise unacceptable behaviour online;
- how to report any incidents of cyberbullying, ensuring students are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim.

Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year

Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety

Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:

- staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when students are not present;
- staff will not take pictures or recordings of students on their personal phones or cameras unless approved by the Headteacher.

Make all students, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology

Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation

Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.

Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community.

Carry out an annual review of our filtering and monitoring effectiveness. This will be conducted by our DSL and IT support.

Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively.

Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our website. https://www.cannockchasehigh.com/about-us/policies-and-reports

Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, students and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

Cannock Chase High School recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard students. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (for example, bullying and grooming) and/or expose students to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Cannock Chase High School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully students in line with this policy and our behaviour policy.

Staff are aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

12 Support for Specific Student Groups

Students with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that students with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- students being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other students;
- the potential for students with sen, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse;
- the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others;
- that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care;
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or being unable to understand the consequences of doing so.

Any abuse involving students with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO. The school consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, and ensure any appropriate support for communication is in place.

Students with medical conditions

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) does not itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners.

A safeguarding referral will be made where an incident highlights concern that the child might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family because of their medical condition. For example, information about the child's medical condition might be withheld from the school, or the child may be repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, putting them at risk.

Young carers

The school recognises that caring responsibilities can impact on a child's attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing, and early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health service.

Students with a social worker

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

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

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

- responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks;
- the provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

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

- appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements;
- the DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads.

We have appointed a Designated Teacher, Mrs J Simpson, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The Designated Teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the Designated Teacher will:

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

Students who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

The school recognises that a child being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, students who are (or who are perceived by other children to be) lesbian, gay, or bisexual can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL.

Students who are questioning their gender

We are aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, such as relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment.

We will take a strong, proactive stance on all forms of bullying based on gender. See our behaviour policy for more detail. The school will ensure that children and their families are aware that, while the school will appropriately sanction any cases of bullying or harassment, and take a strong stand against bullying, it must also be conscious of the rights of students and staff in relation to their religion or belief.

When supporting a student questioning their gender, we will take into account the principle of taking a careful approach.

The DSL will lead in these cases.

Where a child who is questioning their gender asks for support from the school, we will engage parents/carers as a matter of priority.

However, in the rare circumstances where involving parents/carers might put a student at greater risk than not involving them, the DSL will determine a course of action needed to safeguard the child before contacting parents/carers or any decisions are taken.

Where a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not ask the school to make changes to how they are treated, the school will only break any confidence if there is a related safeguarding risk.

Considering requests for support with social transition

The school will not initiate any action regarding social transition. However, when a student or their parent/carer requests that the school makes changes or puts support in place to facilitate the student presenting as the opposite biological sex ("social transition"), we will work together with parents/carers to determine what is in the best interests of the child and other children.
Members of staff will not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the school and a child's parents/carers have been involved (as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)).

In making decisions about supporting social transition, the school will ensure compliance with its obligations in respect of safeguarding legislation and equality and human rights law, ensuring that any assessment of discrimination is informed by the school's evaluation of the welfare and best interests of the child and other children. The schools will make decisions in line with the following principles:

- the school has statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children: the first step when considering a child's request for support with social transition will be to consider what is in the best interests of the child and other children, and a decision relating to social transition may not be the same as a child's wishes;
- parents and carers should be actively involved and their views treated with importance: (except in the rare circumstances where involving parents or carers would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them) where a child who is questioning their gender asks for support from the school parents/carers will be engaged as a matter of priority and their views will carry great weight and be properly considered;
- accommodating social transition is an active intervention so the school will take a very careful approach: social transition is an active intervention that may have significant effects on the child in terms of their psychological functioning and longer-term outcomes;
- the school will comply with obligations under the equality act and human rights act when considering requests for support with social transition.

The school will ensure that the decision-making process is documented and records are kept.

The circumstances or needs of a child may change over time, and the school may need to review its original decision and will involve the DSL in doing so.

Rules on single-sex spaces

Students are not allowed into toilets or changing rooms designated for the opposite biological sex, with no exceptions.

Rules on single-sex sports

The school may teach and play some sports or games, or activities of a competitive nature, in single-sex groups where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). The school can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances.

Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety. Where single-sex sports are implemented for safety reasons, there are no exceptions and students must not be allowed to participate in sports designed for the opposite sex.

13 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 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.

14 Early Help, Child in Need, Child protection and Escalation

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

15 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.

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.

16 Record Keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions must be recorded in writing. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome;
- concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child and will only be accessed by those who need to see it.

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

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

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

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

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

17 Safer Recruitment and Selection

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.
We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- that safeguarding checks will be undertaken;
- the safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children;
- whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

Application Forms

Our application forms will:

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

Shortlisting

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

- consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them;
- explore all potential concerns;
- once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:
    - complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. the information we may ask for includes:
        - if they have a criminal history;
        - whether they are included on the barred list;
        - whether they are prohibited from teaching;
        - information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in england and wales;
        - any relevant overseas information;
        - if they are known to the policy and children's local authority social care; and
        - if they have been disqualified from providing childcare.
- sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.

We will also carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

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

When seeking references we will:

- not accept open references (for example, "to whom it may concern");
- not rely on applicants to obtain their reference;
- liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees;
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations;
- obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed;
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children. if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer;

- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source;
- contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided;
- establish the reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed;
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate;
- resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed.

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this;
- explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children;
- record all information considered and decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

New staff

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

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

sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach;

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

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- responsible, on a frequent basis in a school or college, for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children, providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children, or
- engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once

The above applies to both paid staff and volunteers.

Existing staff and volunteers

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

- there are concerns about an existing member of staff's or the volunteer's suitability to work with children; or
- an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

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

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

This duty applies equally to paid staff and volunteers where they were engaged in regulated activity.

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

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

- an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity;

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

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors, or request to see the certificate if the self-employed person has obtained their own check and ensure that it is at the level required by the school.

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

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

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

Trainee/student teachers

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

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

Volunteers

We will:

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

Governors

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

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

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

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

- a section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008);
- identity;
- right to work in the UK;
- other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

Staff working in alternative provision settings

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

Adults who supervise students on work experience

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

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

Students staying with host families

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

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

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);
- All of KCSIE 2026.

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 on the DfE website (Use of Reasonable Force document). https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools

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.

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 student with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that student, 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

18 Allegations Made Against/Concerns Raised in Relation to Teachers, Including Supply Teachers, Other Staff, Volunteers and Contractors (including low-level concerns)

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

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor, 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 they 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 includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school.

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

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

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

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

If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

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

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

- redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children;

- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted;
- temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location.

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

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

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

Procedure for dealing with allegations

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

- conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below;
- discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or local authority children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police);
- inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or local authority children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or local authority children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies;
- where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or local authority children's social care services, as appropriate;
- where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to local authority children's social care;
- **if immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of

the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details;

- **if it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation;
- **if it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care services as appropriate;
- provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate;
- inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with local authority children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice;
- keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member);
- make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

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

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers, trainee teachers, and all contracted staff

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

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

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate. Teacher training providers are expected to follow the same procedures as supply agencies.

Timescales

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

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

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

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

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

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

Individuals returning to work after suspension

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

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate;

- shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

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

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

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

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

Record-keeping

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

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

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

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome;
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

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

We will retain all records at least until the accused individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

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

Learning lessons

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

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

Non-recent allegations

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

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

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

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

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

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- suspicion;
- complaint;
- safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff;
- disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school;
- pre-employment vetting checks.

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

Definition of low-level concerns

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

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; **and**
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

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

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

Sharing low-level concerns

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

We will create this culture by:

- ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others;
- empowering staff to share any low-level concerns;
- empowering staff to self-refer;
- addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage;
- providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised;
- helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Responding to low-level concerns

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

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

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

Record keeping

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

Records will be:

- kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and the UK GDPR;
- reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority;
- retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school.

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

References

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

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

19 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.

2 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 entrances and sign in through the student entrance if late;
- 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/carer 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 2026	September 2027	Yes

Appendix 1

Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others.

This can be particularly relevant in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Physical abuse 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.

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

Emotional abuse 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;
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. these may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children;
- verbal abuse such as criticism, belittling, or name-calling.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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 penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing;
- 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.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

Advice for education settings

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.
Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person;
- quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images;
- moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform;
- coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes;
- offered something of value such as money or gaming credits;
- threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them;
- use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account;
- use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person.

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person;
- quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first;
- moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform;
- pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes;
- told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts;
- blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person.

Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk of becoming missing from education. These include children who:

- are at risk of harm or neglect;
- are at risk of forced marriage or FGM;
- come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families;
- come from the families of service personnel;
- go missing or run away from home or care;
- are supervised by the youth justice system;
- cease to attend a school;
- come from new migrant families.

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

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

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

Child criminal exploitation

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

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can be perpetrated by organised networks or gangs, and the victim may identify as part of this group.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. It can include children who have been moved for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation;
- suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing;
- misusing drugs and alcohol;
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- regularly missing school or education;
- not taking part in education.

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

Child sexual exploitation

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

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. Most sexual abuse is committed by individuals known to the victim. It can be committed or

facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. Victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take while under coercion.

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

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

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend;
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.

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

Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both victim and alleged perpetrator, it is preventable and it may involve serious physical harm or threats involving weapons.

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

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse');
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon;
- harmful sexual behaviour (an umbrella term widely used in child protection, and which applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both), sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny/misandry;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI;

- upskirting, which is a criminal offence, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

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

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

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

Domestic abuse

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

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

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

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

Police must notify a school of a domestic abuse incident where a child is involved, has witnessed or been present, lives at (or is linked to) the address where it occurred, or where a Child Concern Notification has been issued, regardless of whether the child was there at the time. The police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This notification should reflect the 'voice of the child' (for example, statements made the child or behaviour observed). This is the procedure set out in the statutory Operation Encompass guidance for information sharing.

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Homelessness

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

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

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to local authority children's social care. Where children are living independently from their parent/carers (e.g. if they've been excluded from their family home), we will work with the local authority children's social care team to support them.

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

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

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

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

FGM

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

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

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

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

- the girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider);
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin;
- a parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out;
- a family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues;
- a girl:
    - having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM;
    - having limited level of integration within UK society;
    - confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman";
    - talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period;
    - requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM;
    - talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion);
    - being unexpectedly absent from school;
    - having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

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

Forced marriage

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

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

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

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

The DSL will:

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

Preventing radicalization

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs **Terrorism** is an action that:

- endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
- causes serious damage to property; or
- seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

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

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

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

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

Staff will be alert to changes in students' behaviour.

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

- refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves;
- becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution;
- changes in friendship groups and appearance;
- rejecting activities they used to enjoy;
- converting to a new religion;
- isolating themselves from family and friends;
- talking as if from a scripted speech;
- an unwillingness or inability to discuss their views;
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others;
- increased levels of anger;
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use;
- expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions;
- accessing extremist material online, including on social media;
- possessing extremist literature;
- being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations.

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

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

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

Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

The school will respond to all signs, reports and concerns of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence. This includes incidents occurring outside of the school premises, and/or online.

Sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving:

- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents;
- Assault by penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents;
- Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault);
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity, and each time activity occurs. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity, the age of consent is 16, and sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

HSB can occur:

- between 2 children of any age and sex;
- through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children;
- online and face to face (both physically and verbally).

HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. It can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable. Sexual violence and sexual harassment may overlap.

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

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

When supporting victims, staff will:

- reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them;
- regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt;
- look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns;
- consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again;
- remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs;
- some groups are potentially more at risk. evidence shows that girls, children with sen and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay and bisexual children, or children questioning their gender are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them;
- recognising the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. it's important not to dismiss issues that may seem minor at first, such as derogatory language, as behaviours can escalate into more severe forms of child-on-child abuse.

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

Serious violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern which may involve:

- physical assault;
- carrying, threatening with or using weapons (often in the context of peer conflict or bullying);
- criminal exploitation.

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

- increased absence from school;
- change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;
- significant decline in performance;
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing;
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries;

- unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above)).

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:
- having been frequently absent, suspended, spent time in alternative provision, or permanently excluded from school;
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery;
- being male;
- having experienced child maltreatment;
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence;
- having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence.

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors and will be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school).

If a member of staff has a concern about a student being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, including a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so), they will report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:
- assess the risk to both the individual student and others in the school, consider wider information or concerns and take appropriate action;
- put in place a safety and support plan for the student (depending on the risk);
- where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

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

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

Visitors are expected to sign in using the Inventry online system and wear a visitor's badge.
- visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:
- will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- the organisation sending the professional, such as the local authority or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate).

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

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected, the school will make reasonable attempts to contact the parent/carer and any agreed emergency contacts. The student will remain safely supervised by an appropriate member of staff. If contact cannot be made, or there are concerns about the child's welfare or safety, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL will be informed and appropriate advice and support will be sought from the relevant local authority services. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, the police or emergency services will be contacted. The school will record all relevant actions and communications and will consider whether the non-collection forms part of a wider safeguarding concern.

Missing students

Cannock Chase High School recognises its responsibility to act promptly when a student is believed to be missing from school or has left the school site without permission. Staff will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL and follow the school's missing student procedures. The school will make immediate and appropriate checks to establish the student's whereabouts and will contact parents/carers where appropriate. If the student cannot be located, or there are concerns about their safety or welfare, the police and/or relevant local authority services will be contacted without delay. All actions and communications will be recorded, and the DSL will consider whether the incident indicates any wider safeguarding concerns or risks to the student. On the student's return, appropriate welfare checks and support will be provided.

Appendix 3

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 8033
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 111 8007 or 0300 111 8033
- 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

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
- Women's Aid - 24 Hour Helpline: 0870 2700 123
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline – 0844 381 4772 Safer Internet Helpline
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) – Internet Watch Foundation
- Safer Internet Centre – helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
- Childline – 0800 1111 Childline
- 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