



Bedford Nursery Schools Federation

Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- *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*
- *promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children*
- *taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework.*

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is 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.” (Working Together 2023)

Safeguarding incidents can happen anywhere and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in school, at home, online or within the wider community.

All staff including may raise concerns directly with Local Authority children’s social care services should they feel it necessary.

This Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy forms part of a suite of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the school and should be read in conjunction with the Whistleblowing Policy, Well Being (Behaviour) Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Attendance Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy, PREVENT Policy, Online/E Safety Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection Policy.

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Purpose of the Policy

This policy is designed to inform staff (including supply staff and contractors), parents, volunteers and governors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children and to enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

The school adheres to child protection procedures established by the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership's **Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements** (MASAs), implemented in September 2019 'Pan Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership'.

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/children-young-people/safeguarding-children-board/>

It provides a guide to procedure and practice for all agencies in Bedford Borough working with children and their families. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with Bedford Borough Safeguarding board threshold.

School Staff, Supply Staff, Students and Volunteers

School staff, supply staff, students and volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop and thrive because they have daily contact with children.

All school staff, students and volunteers will receive safeguarding children training so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse or neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow. This training is refreshed at the beginning of each term, our designated person delivers this update. Temporary staff, students and volunteers will be made aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures as part of the induction process. All staff and long term volunteers will be DBS cleared at enhanced level and no volunteer or visitor will be left unsupervised at any time whilst in the school. Training is also available to staff via 'Safeguarding Bedfordshire' the multi-agency provider:

<https://www.safeguardingbedfordshiretraining.co.uk/>

Mission Statement

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we will:

Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have a worry or concern.

Establish and maintain an environment where school staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.

Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.

Ensure that children who have been abused will be supported in line with a child protection plan, where deemed necessary.

Contribute to the five outcomes which are key to children's well-being:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

Implementation, monitoring and review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the designated governor and the designated person and any amendments will be shared with staff and the governing body as appropriate. It will be implemented through the schools induction and training programme, and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the designated senior person and through staff performance measure.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002 (section 175, 157)
- The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Board's [Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) (MASAs), implemented in September 2019 'Pan Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership'.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (*DfE 2024*)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People (2023)
- The Education (pupil information)(England) Regulations 2005
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (2012)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused March 2015
- 'Operation Encompass' for notifications of domestic abuse (Feb 2022)
- Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (June 2016)
- Information Sharing (DfE 2024)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- FGM Act 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- [Use of reasonable force in schools \(DfE, 2013\)](#)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools: departmental advice \(DfE, 2018\)](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies \(DfE, 2017\)](#)
- Prevent Duty guidance: England and Wales (2023)
- [Serious Crime Act 2015](#)
- [Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people \(UK Council for Child Internet Safety, 2016\)](#)
- [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults county lines \(Home Office guidance\)](#)
- [Children missing education \(DfE, 2016\)](#)
- [Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care \(DfE, 2017\)](#)
- [Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners \(DfE, 2017\)](#)
- [The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- [Drugs \(DfE and ACPO guidance\)](#)
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for educational settings](#)
- [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2024](#)
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c024cb8c6d992f23edd79c/Early_years_foundation_stage_statutory_framework_-_for_group_and_school-based_providers.pdf.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children required all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership. Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or are at risk of abuse. These procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff (including supply staff, student, volunteer and contractors) is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 places the following responsibilities on all schools:

- Schools should be aware of and follow the procedures established by the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- Staff should be alert to signs of abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns or suspicions.
- All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) online, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.
- Schools should have procedures of which all staff (including supply staff, students and volunteers) are aware for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff, (including supply staff, student, volunteer and contractor) is accused of abuse or suspected of abuse.
- A designated safeguarding lead should have responsibility for coordinating action within the school and liaising with other agencies.
- Staff with designated responsibility for child protection should receive appropriate training.
- School governors should undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and regularly review the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems.

OVERALL AIMS

This policy will contribute to safeguarding our children/pupils and promoting their welfare by:

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

This policy will contribute to supporting our children/pupils by

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

This policy will contribute to the protection of our children/pupils by

- Including appropriate work within the curriculum.
- Implementing safeguarding/child protection policies and procedures;
- Working in partnership with children parents/carers and agencies.
- Ensuring all children are supported to learn and understand the significant relationships in their lives to include what constitutes an appropriate relationship with adults and their peers.

KEY PRINCIPLES

These are the key principles of safeguarding children are:

- Always see the child first.
- Never do nothing.
- Do with, not to, others.
- Do the simple things better.
- Have conversations; build relationships.
- Outcomes not output.

KEY PEOPLE AND CONTACTS

The DSL is: Julie Smith (EHT)

The Deputy DSLs are: Suzie Hoefkens (DHT/SENDSCO) and Clare Oliver (FSW)

The Designated Safeguarding Persons: Anna Browning and Alessandra Mastrandrea

The Safeguarding Governor is: Deborah Simpkin (Chair)

The Prevent SPOC is: Julie Smith

The Operation Encompass SPOC is: Julie Smith

LADO is Sandeep Mohan LADO@bedford.gov.uk

Integrated Front Door Tel: 01234 718700 during office hours 0300 300 8123 out of hours

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/children-young-people/safeguarding-children-board/are-you-worried-about-a-child/>

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

The Designated Lead for Safeguarding/Child Protection for Bedford Nursery Schools Federation is **Mrs Julie Smith**.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are **Ms Suzie Hoefkens and Mrs Clare Oliver**.

The federation also have Designated Safeguarding Persons: **Mrs Anna Browning and Ms Alessandra Mastrandrea**

The Deputy DSLs and Designated Safeguarding Persons are trained to the same level as the DSL and will undertake this role operationally with direct oversight from the DSL who maintains lead responsibility. There will be one person with in-depth safeguarding training available in school at all times

It is the responsibility of the Designated Lead for Safeguarding/Child Protection to:

- take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place)
- Ensure that they receive refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep their knowledge and skills up to date
- attend DSL Professional Study Groups and read safeguarding updates/bulletins
- Ensure that all new staff receive a safeguarding children induction within 7 working days of the commencement of their contract
- Ensure all staff receive at least annual refresher training and make staff aware of training opportunities and latest policies related to local safeguarding arrangements
- Review the Safeguarding/Child Protection policy annually and procedures/implementation are reviewed regularly, and work with the Governing Body on this
- Ensure that temporary staff, supply staff and volunteers are made aware of the schools' arrangements for safeguarding children within 7 days of their commencement of work
- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance.
- Ensure that all staff, supply staff and volunteers are aware of the BBSCP Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.
- Ensure reports are submitted to or the school's attendance at child protection conferences and contribute to decision making and delivery of actions planned to safeguard the child
- Ensure that accurate safeguarding records relating to individual children are stored securely and confidentially, separate from academic files in a secure folder and uploaded to My Concerns, accessed only by those who need to see them. Records are passed securely and timely in line with current government guidance on the transfer of such records when the child moves to a new school (5 days for child protection records).
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children about whom there are concerns, including notifying Children's Services; Safeguarding and Specialist Services when there is an unexplained absence of more than two days for a child who is the subject of a child protection plan.
- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required
- Support staff including supply staff and who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required
- Support staff including supply staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff including supply staff.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. 'When to call the police' should help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do
- The designated safeguarding lead and any deputies should liaise with the three safeguarding partners in Bedford Borough and work with other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#).
- Decide upon the appropriate level of response to specific concerns about a child e.g. discuss with parents, offer to undertake assessment under the EHA or refer to IFD, inform relevant Social Worker in accordance with [Threshold of Need: Guidance for Effective Support for Children & Families in Bedford](#)
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare, and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically

- Provide guidance to parents/carers, children and staff including supply staff and volunteers about obtaining suitable support.
- Discuss with new parents the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the role of safeguarding in school. Make parents aware of the safeguarding procedures used and how to access the safeguarding children/child protection policy.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners - (the local authority; Integrated Care Boards (previously known as clinical commissioning group) and the chief officer of police.
- Liaise with the head teacher where the head teacher is not the lead person to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- As required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors)
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; 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 to best support these children.
- Be the Designated Teacher for any ‘children looked after’, write the child’s PEP and attend PEP meetings.
- Be the named contact (SPOC) for Operation Encompass.
- Be the named contact (SPOC) for Prevent.

Refer to Annex C: The role of the designated safeguarding lead, KCSIE 2025.

THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard children in their establishment. It is recommended that a nominated governor for safeguarding, including child protection is appointed to take lead responsibility.

The nominated governor for safeguarding is: *Mrs Deborah Simpkin*

In particular the governing body must ensure:

- Safeguarding/Child protection policy and procedures.
- Safer recruitment procedures.
- They facilitate a whole school approach to Safeguarding.
- Multi-Agency working in line with statutory Guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)’ and Safeguarding Partners.
- Safeguarding and child protection files are maintained.
- Staff and Governors receive appropriate training to provide them with the knowledge to ensure their schools’ safeguarding policies and procedures are effective (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, KCSIE 2024) at induction.
- They are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- They are aware of their obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Appointment of DSL who is a senior member of the school leadership team.
- Appointment of the Designated Teacher for children looked after
- Relevant training for safeguarding children is attended by staff and volunteers.
- Procedures for safe management of any allegations about staff members that do or do not meet the threshold, low level concerns should be addressed as set out in section 2 part for of KCSIE 2024), including supply staff, volunteers and contractors.

- Deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.
- A member of the governing body (usually the Chair) is nominated to be responsible in the event of an allegation being made against the Head Teacher.
- There are effective Safeguarding and Behaviour (well-being) Policies, including staff behaviour/Code of Conduct.
- There are appropriate safeguarding arrangements to respond to children who go missing in education.
- Emergency contacts (more than one) for each child.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed annually and information provided to the local authority about them and about how the above duties have been discharged.
- The effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems are regularly reviewed to limit risks arising from use of the schools' IT system (devices and networks).
- Children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.
- The school operates 'safer recruitment' procedures and ensures that appropriate checks are carried out on all new staff and relevant volunteers, contractors and supply staff in accordance with KCSIE (2024).

It is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. See ICO guidance 'For Organisations' which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information. In addition, see the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which will help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES – STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

If any member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) is concerned about a child they must inform the designated lead in their school.

The member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) must record information regarding the concerns on the same day. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations. This should be made on the My Concerns proformas which are available in all classrooms. The entry should be dated in full (dd/mm/yyyy) and handed to the most senior member of staff on site immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed immediately that a concern has been raised. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy will decide what steps should be taken in accordance with [Threshold of Need: Guidance for Effective Support for Children & Families in Bedford](#) and initiate a response accordingly. The concerns may be referred to Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services (the Integrated Front Door), but any member of staff may raise concerns directly with Local Authority Children's Social Care Services via the Integrated Front Door (IFD).

If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services (IFD) this will be discussed with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom the school has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan and a written record will be kept and social worker notified.

Particular attention should be given to Children Looked After (CLA) who may have additional vulnerabilities.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then input the information onto the My Concerns system or ask the administration staff to do this.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Family Support Worker are responsible for making the senior leadership team aware of trends in behaviour that may affect pupil welfare. If necessary, training will be arranged.

Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Whilst all children should be protected, it is important that the school and governing body recognise that some groups of children, such as younger aged children with limited language development, are potentially at greater risk of harm than others. The list below, is not exhaustive, but highlights some of those groups.

Children with Social Workers (CIN and CP Plans)

Where a child is on a Child in Need or Child Protection plan a named social worker should be in place. The details of this social worker should be notified to the school by the Local Authority and the DSL should record this information. The school should liaise with the named Social Worker when decisions are made with regard to safeguarding, for example unauthorised absences from school and promoting welfare. Evidence from CIN and CP meetings should be considered when making decisions in these cases.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be aware of and make reference to the Review of Children in Need document updated in June 2019 to inform decisions about welfare and safeguarding

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-children-in-need/review-of-children-in-need>

If a child who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes school, the DSL will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the DSL at the receiving school, in a secure manner, and separate from the child's academic file within 5 days of the child starting at the new school..

Children Looked After and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies should ensure that staff including supply staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

The Governing Body should appoint a 'Designated Teacher' who should work with the Local Authority to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after or previously looked after. The Designated Teacher must have the appropriate training, relevant qualifications and experience. Statutory guidance: Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher. The Designated Teacher should work with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational outcomes for children looked after and previously looked after children, including the use of EYPP to support progress and meet the identified needs in a child looked after personal education plan (PEP). In addition to their statutory duties, the role of virtual school heads was 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.

Statutory guidance on 'Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children' contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads. In September 2024, the role of Virtual School Heads was further extended to include a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care. Non-statutory guidance on Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of Virtual School Heads

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Nursery School children are not of compulsory school age. If we have concerns about a child missing in education then we would notify the local authority via the IFD. When children leave the nursery school all attempts will be made to establish their destination school so that effective handover can happen. A log of Reception aged children is kept to show when and where they transitioned to with the date and details of a handover. Liaison takes place with the new school and the local authority admissions team.

Nursery School children are not of compulsory school age, however BNSF recognises the importance of promoting positive attendance patterns and the statutory schools guidance [Working together to improve school attendance](#).

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions, unexplainable and/or persistent absences (can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including abuse and neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. Attendance is monitored daily through the class registers and children identified as not attending on a regular basis are referred to the Family Support Worker and Senior Leaders so that attempts can be made to ensure children attend school. The Attendance Policy promotes good patterns of attendance to support children's learning and development. It helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. Where practical the school will hold more than one emergency contact on file for a child. (Please refer to the Attendance Policy). **In line with the EYFS statutory Framework, if a child's absence is unexplained or prolonged, or if there are concerns about the child's well-being, the provider has a duty to make a referral to local children's social care services or request a welfare call from the police.**

CHILDREN WITH SEND

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more vulnerable to abuse. Additional and individualised support and attention for these children and their families is given through close liaison between their Key Person, SENDCO, FSW and the DSL, as well as external professionals.

Further information can be found in 'The SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years' and 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions', as well as from specialist organisations such as:

- Bedford Parent Carer Forum
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS)
- Mencap
- NSPCC

MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

In line with KCSIE 2025 Bedford Nursery Schools understands its role in the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Working Together 2023 sets out requirements for collaborative working arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and families which will lead to improved outcomes and experiences.

The Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership's [Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) (MASAs) were implemented in September 2019 'Pan Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership'. The MASA sets out the arrangements for safeguarding partners to work together with other agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children in Bedford Borough, and the three safeguarding partners Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire Police and the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (BLMKICB) (previously Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group) have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. The DSL, Julie Smith, is the Early Years representative for the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Safeguarding partners (the local authority; Integrated Care Boards (previously known as clinical commissioning group) for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area (any part of which falls) within the local authority area) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

The three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. To fulfil this role they must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies. Education is viewed as the fourth partner.

Operation Encompass

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are working in partnership with Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household; nationally and locally, this scheme is called Operation Encompass. In order to achieve this, the police will share information with the Nominated SPOC of all domestic incidents where one of the pupils in the school has been affected. On receipt of any information, the Nominated SPOC will decide on the appropriate support the child requires. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures and the appropriate referral should be made to the local authority children's social care.

All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the 'Operation Encompass guidance for schools'. The information will be recorded and stored in accordance with the record keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

Early Help Assessment

We will work pro-actively with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

Any child or family may benefit from Early Help, all staff should be alert to the potential need for Early Help for a child or family who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- 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 alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child. (KCSIE, 2025 and Working Together, 2023)

If Early Help is appropriate, the FSW will lead on liaising with other agencies and professionals and may act as lead professional if 'Team Around the Family' meetings are required. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority children's social care services for statutory assessment if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff, including supply staff and volunteers in schools.

- Child Protection information will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the designated safeguarding person feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child or family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared with whom and when.
- All staff in schools, both teaching, non-teaching staff, supply staff and volunteers, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services and the Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff, supply staff or volunteer tell the child in a manner

appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

- Staff, supply staff or volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- **Do not disclose to a parent any information held on a child if this would put the child at risk of significant harm.**

Child Protection records will be stored securely in the office cabinet, separate from academic records or uploaded to 'My Concerns' and saved in the secure Safeguarding folder on the school drive. Individual files will be kept for each child; the school will not keep family files. Files will be kept for the period during which the child is attending the school, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance.

The federation now also uses an online system for recording safeguarding records called My Concerns. All staff have a user name and password to access this system in order to enable them to access resources such as policies and risk assessments. Only the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will have the level of access required to update individual cases and the secure Safeguarding folder on the Shared Drive.

Access to these records by staff other than the Designated Safeguarding Persons will be restricted.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Bedford Nursery Schools Federation will:

Undertake appropriate discussion with parents prior to involvement of another agency unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the school and staff for safeguarding children.

Display the policy on the school website and include a section in the parent handbook and new parents meeting.

STAFF SUPPORT

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of child protection work. We will support staff including supply staff and volunteers by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and to seek further support as appropriate. All staff are invited to arrange 1:1 supervision with the FSW or senior member of staff at any time.

RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It is a key factor identified in many serious case reviews where poor information sharing has resulted in missed opportunities to take action that keeps children and young people safe. When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff, supply staff/volunteer should:

- Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation. Use the school My Concerns form available in the classroom.
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the full date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Use the diagram on proforma to indicate the position of any injuries
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions

All records need to be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff, including supply staff and volunteer. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations

2005. All safeguarding concerns will be logged digitally on the system called 'My Concerns'. All this information will be maintained in line with the schools GDPR record management policy.

Bedford Nursery Schools Federation pays close attention to the DfE guidelines on information sharing and adheres to the 7 golden rules to sharing information. 'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1062969/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

It is noted that KCSIE 2025 states:

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

- Remember that the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights laws are NOT barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
- Be open and honest with the individual (and their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- Seek advice from the information governance lead Data Protection Officer, if you are in any doubt about sharing information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
- Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
- Consider safety and well-being; base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure the information that you share is necessary for the purpose you are sharing it, it is only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a time fashion and is shared securely.
- Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Designated Safeguarding Leads or other concerned practitioners should refer to the Data Sharing Toolkit available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-toolkit-for-schools> for further guidance.

HOW AND WHEN TO SHARE INFORMATION

When asked to share information, you should use the flowchart on appendix 2 to help you decide if, and when, to share. If the decision is take to share, you should consider how best to effectively share the information. (see appendix 2 for flowchart)

Further details on information sharing can be found:

Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children, which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers. The seven golden rules for sharing information will be especially useful

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/business/>

Data protection: toolkit for schools - Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with the UK GDPR

A SAFER SCHOOL CULTURE

Safer recruitment and selection

The federation pays full regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE 2025). Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, completion of a full application form, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, considering online searches as part of due diligence and informing candidates of this, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews, requesting references, a self-declaration and undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) and criminal records checks for overseas applicants. The Single Central Record is maintained by the Business Manager and is reviewed at least annually by the designated governor. The SCR includes checks for teacher prohibition and staff self-declaration forms are completed annually. All governors are subject to a S128 check and this information is included in the SCR.

All recruitment materials will include a reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children.

Mrs Julie Smith, Mrs Penny Stubbs, Ms Suzie Hoefkens, Mrs Jane Walker, Mr Robin Thomas and Mrs Deborah James have undertaken Safer Recruitment training and one of them will be involved in all staff/volunteer recruitment and sit on the recruitment panel.

Any staff recruited through supply agencies will have all necessary paperwork in place before commencing any placement. Proof of checks made by the recruiting agencies will be shared with BNSF along with ID checks. Contractors, trainees, visitors and volunteers will be made aware of our school safeguarding procedures and we will seek assurance from employees, organisations and volunteers have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with KCSIE 2025.

ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING SCHOOL STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS OR CONTRACTORS

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor may have:

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

This applies to any child the member of staff, supply staff/volunteer has contact within their personal, professional or community life.

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present.

This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the Head Teacher.

If the concerns are about the Head Teacher, then the Chair of Governors should be contacted. The Chair of Governors for the federation is: *Mrs Deborah Simpkin* and she can be contacted via the school offices or through the clerk to governors.

In the absence of the Chair of Governors the Vice Chair should be contacted through the clerk to the governors - clerk@bedfordnurseryschools.com.

The recipient of an allegation must **not** unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

The Head Teacher will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether it is necessary to refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer LADO@bedford.gov.uk. If the allegation meets any of the three criteria set out at the start of this section, contact should always be made with the Local Authority Designated Officer without delay.

If it is decided that the allegation meets the threshold for safeguarding, this will take place in accordance with Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children's Board. The Pan Bedfordshire **Allegations and Concerns regarding Staff, Carers and Volunteers Working with Children and Young People** are the umbrella procedures for managing allegations and concerns regarding staff, carers and volunteers.

If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be handed back to the employer for consideration via the school's internal procedures.

The Head Teacher should, as soon as possible, following briefing from the Local Authority Designated Officer inform the subject of the allegation.

If an allegation is made against a governor, the school will follow its own local procedures. Where an allegation is substantiated, it will follow the procedures to consider removing them from office.

If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), as with any safeguarding allegation, the school will follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Sharing low-level concerns

Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially with the DSL/Head teacher. The head teacher should be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns. Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.¹⁶ If there is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they should consult with their LADO. The school should ensure it creates an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. These records are kept in staff files marked 'confidential' held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school or college should decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO (as per Part four, Section one, KCSIE, 2023). Consideration should also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. It is recommended that records are retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.

For further information see:

Allegations and Concerns regarding Staff, Carers and Volunteers Working with Children and Young People
https://bedfordscb.proceduresonline.com/p_alleg_staff_wk_ch_yp.html

Good safeguarding requires a continuing commitment from the governing body and all staff to ensure the safety and welfare of children is embedded in all of the school's processes and procedures, and consequentially enshrined in its ethos. The governing body should ensure they have processes in place for continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. To support this, it is important that school and college leaders create the right culture and environment so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters both within, and where it is appropriate, outside of the workplace, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children.

OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are aware that it is our responsibility to ensure children are taught about safeguarding themselves and others in a way that children of this age can understand, including online safety. It is never the aim to frighten or alarm children or make them unduly anxious about the world around them. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole school approach that prepares children for life in modern Britain.

Practitioners will deliver this education through the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum 2021 with particular regard to Personal, Social and Emotional Development, in preparation for the National Curriculum RSHE (Sept 2020, **revised guidance expected to be published**), including (at an age-appropriate stage) issues such as: healthy and respectful relationships; protective behaviours; boundaries and consent; stereotyping, prejudice and equality; body confidence and self-esteem. The Key Person system and FSW enables all children and families to have a trusted person who they can be open with.

SITE SECURITY

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

We check the identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out **using the 'Sign In' app on the ipad in Reception** and to display a visitor's badge while on the school site. Visitors will be asked to read key safeguarding information whilst signing in. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.

Use of school or college premises for non-school/college activities

Where governing bodies rent out school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe. When services or activities are provided by the governing body, under the direct supervision or management of their school 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 should therefore 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 on these matters where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll. The governing body or proprietor should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The guidance on Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings details the safeguarding arrangements that schools and colleges should expect these providers to have in place.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice/keeping-children-safe-during-community-activities-after-school-clubs-and-tuition-non-statutory-guidance-for-providers-running-out-of-school-settings>

Alternative Provision

BNSF recognises that where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

PART 2

When to be concerned
Dealing with disclosures
Categories of abuse
Indicators of harm

Further guidance

WHEN TO BE CONCERNED

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff, supply staff and volunteers should be aware that the main categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Neglect.

All staff, supply staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if he/she presents with indicators of possible significant harm – **see page 25 for details.**

Generally, in an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s or other household members e.g. siblings or others outside of the home.
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development.
- (full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).
- Display insufficient sense of 'boundaries', lack stranger awareness.
- Appear wary of adults and display 'frozen watchfulness'.

DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff, supply staff or volunteer should:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely.
- Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services.
- Reassure him or her that what has happened is not his or her fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify.
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping).
- Pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Person without delay.

All staff should be 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.

ONLINE SAFETY

As more pupils access online teaching the governing body will ensure that all parents are aware of the dangers of children accessing inappropriate online materials and the importance of using parental controls and adult supervision whilst online. Advice and guidance will be available for all parents (see separate list for details of all support for online safety) and the appropriate filters and firewalls that will be in use in school. Age appropriate websites are also shared with parents. Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the governing body do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, the governing body ensures the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

The Department for Education has published filtering and monitoring standards which set out that schools should: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

- 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.
 - schools can use the department's 'plan technology for your school service' to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.

The Department has published [Generative AI: product safety expectations](#) to support schools to use generative artificial intelligence safely, and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education.

The school use E2BN who are compliant with the DfE Standards. DWM (IT providers) also review our systems using the DfE guidance and standards.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, [misinformation, disinformation \(including fake news\) and conspiracy theories](#).

contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying).

commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If the school feels children or staff are at risk, the school will report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

The school is directly responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network. In addition, the school meets the Cyber security standards for schools. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cyber-security-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Cyber security training is completed by staff and governors.

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/cyber-security-training-schools>

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation all adults recognise that we have an important part to play in the support of children and their mental health and well being. We acknowledge that behaviour and sudden or unexplained changes in children's behaviour can be an indicator that a child is suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

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

The school has a Well Being Policy in place and undertake regular observations of children's well being and involvement using the Leuven Scales.

The school have staff members training in Infant Mental Health who can be called upon to offer further support for children where a need may be identified.

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

Two members of staff have completed 'Infant Mental Health' training. There are also four members of staff who are Mental Health First Aiders.

The school has a clear route of escalation in place and makes the appropriate referrals for mental health support for children and parents. These include, but may not be exclusive to:

- EHA – Early Help Assessment through Bedford Borough Council
- Child's GP
- Health Visitor Team
- Children's Centre
- CAMHS/CHUMS
- Child Development Centre

Further detailed guidance can be found at:

[Childrens Mental Health](#)

[The Anna Freud Centre](#)

Further guidance and advice on mental health can be found at Public Health England.

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#)

[Preventing and tackling bullying advice](#)

CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are aware that some children will have a parent who is in prison or may be sentenced whilst they are in our care. We acknowledge that these children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health and may require specialist support and will make appropriate referrals to Children's Services.

Further guidance on support for these children and families can be sought from [NICCO](#), which provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are aware of the potential for exploitation of some of our pupils, parents and/or older siblings.

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity:

- in 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 victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines) forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Staff including supply staff should be vigilant for the following indicators in children at school:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- parents/older siblings who associate with other people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- parents/siblings who may misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who regularly miss school or education

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are aware of the potential for sexual exploitation of some of our pupils, parents and/or older siblings.

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity

(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or

(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

Staff including supply staff should be vigilant for the following indicators in children at school:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- parents/older siblings who associate with other people involved in sexual exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- parents/siblings who may misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who regularly miss school or education
- changes in children's behaviours

DOMESTIC ABUSE

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are aware of the potential for domestic abuse of some of our pupils, parents and/or older siblings.

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

SERIOUS VIOLENCE (INDICATORS IN PARENTS)

All staff including supply should be aware of indicators, which may signal that parents/carers of children attending the school are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence of their child from school, a change in relationships with other adults, signs of self-harm or unexplained injuries and a change in general well-being. Unexplained gifts or possessions could indicate that parents/carers have been approached to be involved in serious violent criminal gangs.

Staff including supply staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is available via the Home Office publication Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence and Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines.

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

At Bedford Nursery Schools we are aware that children can be perpetrators as well as victims of child on child abuse. 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 (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)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, physical behaviours and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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 sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, 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, and
- 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).

Whilst we acknowledge this could be an incident within the age group of our pupils we are mindful that our parents may be subject to this abuse as young people themselves.

We acknowledge that historical abuse may have taken place and have procedures in place to support a parent that may disclose this to a member of school staff.

Any person, staff or parent, who discloses a case of current or historical sexual abuse that occurred in an educational setting will be supported by the DSL or Deputy DSL to make contact with all relevant professional support services and this will begin with the new NSPCC Helpline ‘Report Abuse in Education’ 0800 136 663. Any person that reports a case of abuse will be treated with respect and reassured that they are being taken seriously. They will never be made to feel that they are creating a problem or issue or made to feel ashamed. Part 5 of KCSIE 2025 Child on child sexual violence and harassment has been expanded to incorporate guidance previously covered in the DfE’s ‘Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges’ advice. The information emphasises:

- the importance of explaining to children (or parents) that the law is in place to protect rather than criminalise them;
- the importance of understanding intra-familial harms, and any necessary support for siblings (possibly children) following incidents;
- the need for schools to be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners;
- children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses or no overt signs at all;
- patterns identified in schools may also be reflective of the wider issues within the local area.

COUNTY LINES *(parents and siblings)*

At Bedford Nursery Schools Federation we are aware of the term ‘County Lines’ and the possible implications on our families **within our community**. We appreciate that parents and/or older siblings of our children may become involved in the import and export of illegal drugs through coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons and the effect this could have on children in our school.

Children and young adults can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child or parent at our school is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Further information on County Lines is available from the [Home Office](#)¹

¹ Home office <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on all teachers (Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England). If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

N.B. This section remains under review in KCSIE 2025, pending the publication of revised guidance on gender questioning children. Staff should be aware that a child or young person being lesbian, gay, bisexual or bi-sexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

Preventing radicalisation

Note: This preventing radicalisation section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 14 March 2024. Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

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

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern. It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior

leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of three general themes: leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments.

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

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives. Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance and Channel training from the Home Office.

The Department has published further advice for those working in education settings with safeguarding responsibilities on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.
Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000)
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- Channel awareness e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

Educate Against Hate, is a government website designed to support school and college teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the Prevent for FE and Training. This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings to comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

The Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation (etfoundation.co.uk) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

London Grid for Learning has also produced useful resources on Prevent (Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning (lgfl.net)).

INDICATORS OF HARM

PHYSICAL 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.

INDICATORS IN THE CHILD

Bruising

It is often possible to differentiate between accidental and inflicted bruises. The following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Bruising in or around the mouth
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally, for example the back, mouth, cheek, ear, stomach, chest, under the arm, neck, genital and rectal areas
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Linear bruising at any site, particularly on the buttocks, back or face
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks to the upper arms, forearms or leg
- Petechial haemorrhages (pinpoint blood spots under the skin.) Commonly associated with slapping, smothering/suffocation, strangling and squeezing

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. It is unlikely that a child will have had a fracture without the carers being aware of the child's distress.

If the child is not using a limb, has pain on movement and/or swelling of the limb, there may be a fracture.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- Rib fractures are only caused in major trauma such as in a road traffic accident, a severe shaking injury or a direct injury such as a kick.
- Skull fractures are uncommon in ordinary falls, i.e. from three feet or less. The injury is usually witnessed, the child will cry and if there is a fracture, there is likely to be swelling on the skull developing over 2 to 3 hours. All fractures of the skull should be taken seriously.

Mouth Injuries

Tears to the frenulum (tissue attaching upper lip to gum) often indicates force feeding of a baby or a child with a disability. There is often finger bruising to the cheeks and around the mouth. Rarely, there may also be grazing on the palate.

Poisoning

Ingestion of tablets or domestic poisoning in children under 5 is usually due to the carelessness of a parent or carer, but it may be self-harm even in young children.

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth when seen shortly after the injury has been inflicted. The shape then becomes a more defused ring bruise or oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical/dental opinion, preferably within the first 24 hours, should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds. Scalds are the most common intentional burn injury recorded.

Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g. circular burns from cigarettes, linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements, burns of uniform depth over a large area, scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid.

Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation. Scalds to the buttocks of a child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

The following points are also worth remembering:

- A responsible adult checks the temperature of the bath before the child gets in.
- A child is unlikely to sit down voluntarily in a hot bath and cannot accidentally scald its bottom without also scalding his or her feet.
- A child getting into too hot water of his or her own accord will struggle to get out and there will be splash marks

Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, or unusually shaped, may suggest abuse.

Fabricated or Induced Illness

Professionals may be concerned at the possibility of a child suffering significant harm as a result of having illness fabricated or induced by their carer. Possible concerns are:

- Discrepancies between reported and observed medical conditions, such as the incidence of fits
- Attendance at various hospitals, in different geographical areas
- Development of feeding / eating disorders, as a result of unpleasant feeding interactions
- The child developing abnormal attitudes to their own health
- Non organic failure to thrive - a child does not put on weight and grow and there is no underlying medical cause
- Speech, language or motor developmental delays
- Dislike of close physical contact
- Attachment disorders
- Low self esteem
- Poor quality or no relationships with peers because social interactions are restricted
- Poor attendance at school and under-achievement

Emotional/behavioural presentation

- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted and fear of returning home
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression towards others

- Frequently absent from school
- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury

Indicators in the parent

- May have injuries themselves that suggest domestic violence
- Not seeking medical help/unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- Reluctant to give information or mention previous injuries
- Absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Disinterested or undisturbed by accident or injury
- Aggressive towards child or others
- Unauthorised attempts to administer medication
- Tries to draw the child into their own illness.
- Past history of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault
- Parent/carer may be over involved in participating in medical tests, taking temperatures and measuring bodily fluids
- Observed to be intensely involved with their children, never taking a much needed break nor allowing anyone else to undertake their child's care.
- May appear unusually concerned about the results of investigations which may indicate physical illness in the child
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse.
- Parent/carer has convictions for violent crimes.

Indicators in the family/environment

- Marginalised or isolated by the community
- History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family.
- Past history of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, for example the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse within the home including where they see, hear or experience its effects. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Indicators in the child

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Child scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' - difficulty relating to others
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Low self-esteem
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Depression, withdrawal
- Behavioural problems e.g. aggression, attention seeking, hyperactivity, poor attention
- Low self-esteem, lack of confidence, fearful, distressed, anxious
- Poor peer relationships including withdrawn or isolated behaviour

Indicators in the parent

- Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to abuse.
- Abnormal attachment to child e.g. overly anxious or disinterest in the child
- Scapegoats one child in the family
- Imposes inappropriate expectations on the child e.g. prevents the child's developmental exploration or learning, or normal social interaction through overprotection.
- Wider parenting difficulties may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse.

Indicators of in the family/environment

- Lack of support from family or social network.
- Marginalised or isolated by the community.
- History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.

NEGLECT

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); or*
- *ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*

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

Indicators in the child

Physical presentation

- Failure to thrive or, in older children, short stature
- Underweight
- Frequent hunger
- Dirty, unkempt condition
- Inadequately clothed, clothing in a poor state of repair
- Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold
- Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury
- Abnormal voracious appetite
- Dry, sparse hair
- Recurrent / untreated infections or skin conditions e.g. severe nappy rash, eczema or persistent head lice / scabies/ diarrhoea
- Unmanaged / untreated health / medical conditions including poor dental health
- Frequent accidents or injuries

Development

- General delay, especially speech and language delay
- Inadequate social skills and poor socialization

Emotional/behavioural presentation

- Attachment disorders
- Absence of normal social responsiveness
- Indiscriminate behaviour in relationships with adults
- Emotionally needy
- Compulsive stealing
- Constant tiredness
- Frequently absent or late at school
- Poor self esteem
- Destructive tendencies
- Thrives away from home environment
- Aggressive and impulsive behaviour
- Disturbed peer relationships
- Self-harming behaviour

Indicators in the parent

- Dirty, unkempt presentation
- Inadequately clothed
- Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
- Abnormal attachment to the child .e.g. anxious
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Failure to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene

- Failure to meet the child's health and medical needs e.g. poor dental health; failure to attend or keep appointments with health visitor, GP or hospital; lack of GP registration; failure to seek or comply with appropriate medical treatment; failure to address parental substance misuse during pregnancy
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods
- Wider parenting difficulties, may (or may not) be associated with this form of abuse

Indicators in the family/environment

- History of neglect in the family
- Family marginalised or isolated by the community.
- Family has history of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Family has a past history of childhood abuse, self-harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
- Dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
- Poor state of home environment e.g. unhygienic facilities, lack of appropriate sleeping arrangements, inadequate ventilation (including passive smoking) and lack of adequate heating
- Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

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

Indicators in the child

Physical presentation

- Urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital or anal areas
- Recurrent pain on passing urine or faeces
- Blood on underclothes
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Vaginal soreness or bleeding
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed and/or there is secrecy or vagueness about the identity of the father
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

Emotional/behavioural presentation

- Makes a disclosure.
- Demonstrates sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
- Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Self-harm - eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
- Reluctant to undress for PE
- Running away from home
- Poor attention / concentration (world of their own)
- Sudden changes in school work habits, become truant
- Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- Wetting or other regressive behaviours e.g. thumb sucking
- Draws sexually explicit pictures
- Depression

Indicators in the parents

- Comments made by the parent/carer about the child.
- Lack of sexual boundaries
- Wider parenting difficulties or vulnerabilities
- Grooming behaviour
- Parent is a sex offender

Indicators in the family/environment

- Marginalised or isolated by the community.
- History of mental health, alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence.
- History of unexplained death, illness or multiple surgery in parents and/or siblings of the family
- Past history of childhood abuse, self harm, somatising disorder or false allegations of physical or sexual assault or a culture of physical chastisement.
- Family member is a sex offender.

HONOUR BASED ABUSE

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage (since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used) and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Female Genital Mutilation

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

What is FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 types of procedure:

Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris

Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora

Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia

Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
 - Preserves a girl's virginity
 - Part of being a woman / rite of passage
 - Upholds family honour
 - Cleanses and purifies the girl
 - Gives a sense of belonging to the community
 - Fulfils a religious requirement
 - Perpetuates a custom/tradition
 - Helps girls be clean / hygienic
 - Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

Is FGM legal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is **illegal** in most countries including the UK.

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening are:

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Disclosure

Reporting procedures

Where a member of staff is aware that a child has undergone FGM either through a disclosure or from observing this, they have a responsibility under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 to report this to the Police. This should be done directly but with the support of their designated safeguarding lead. If a member of staff has concerns that a child is at risk of FGM then they would report this to their safeguarding lead who will make the decision of what action to take.

Where a member of staff receives information from a child that a family member under the age of 18 may have undergone FGM then this must be reported to the DSL in school.

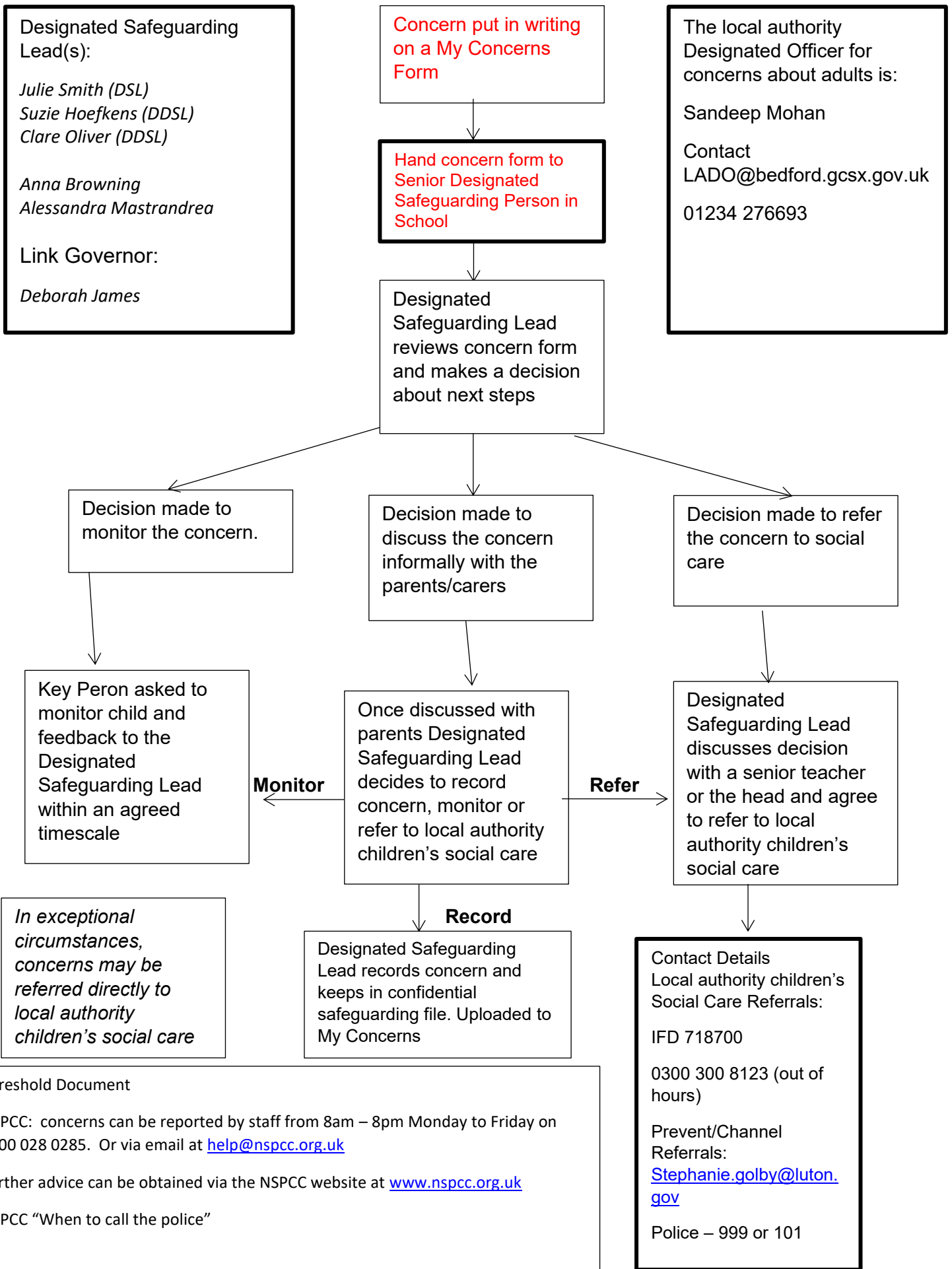
UPSKIRTING

Upskirting is defined as follows: “typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genital or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence and may constitute sexual harassment”.

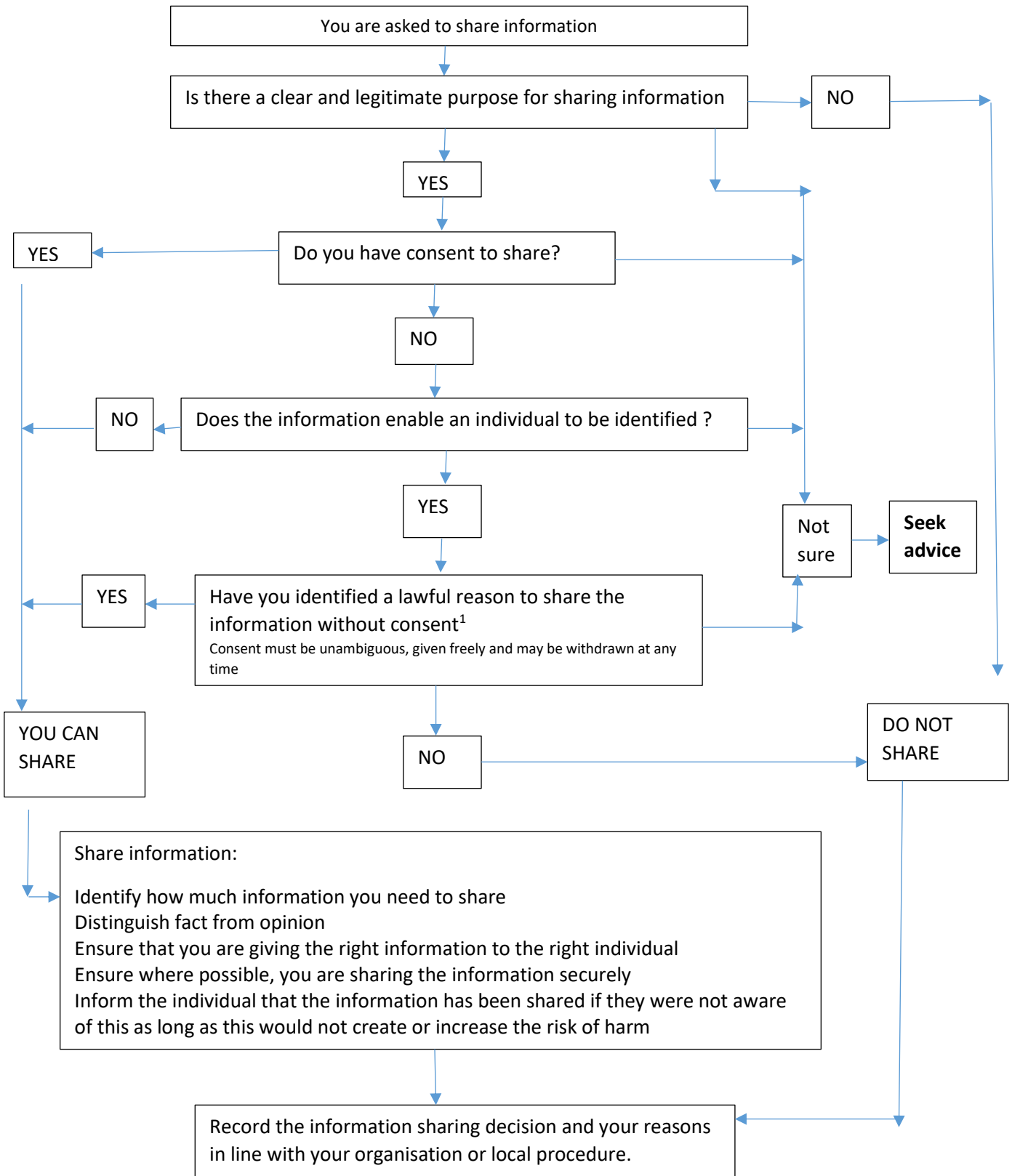
All cases of suspected upskirting should be reported to the Head Teacher (DSL) immediately. This offence is covered under the [Voyeurism Act¹](#)

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force>

FLOW CHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



Flowchart of when and how to share information



PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR ONLINE SAFETY

- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- [Commonsensemedia](#) provide independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents
- [Government advice](#) about protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- [Government advice](#) about security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls
- [Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [Let's Talk About It](#) provides advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- [London Grid for Learning](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation [StopItNow](#) resource can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)
- [National Crime Agency/CEOP Thinkuknow](#) provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) provides support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- [Parentzone](#) provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online
- [Parent info](#) from Parentzone and the National Crime Agency provides support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provide tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online
- [Harmful Online Challenges and online Hoaxes](#) this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.

EDUCATION SUPPORT FOR ONLINE SAFETY

- [Education for a connected world framework](#) from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.
- [Teaching online safety](#) in school is departmental guidance outlining how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements
- [Thinkuknow](#) is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age specific resources
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) developed guidance and resources that can help with the teaching of the online safety component of the Computing Curriculum

ANNEX B OF KCSIE 2025

Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

Table of contents:

Child abduction and community safety incidents

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

County lines

Children and the court system (includes 2 separate age-appropriate guides for schools)

Children missing from education

Children with family members in prison

Cybercrime

Domestic abuse

Homelessness

Mental health

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Preventing radicalisation

The Prevent duty

Channel

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Serious Violence

So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

FGM

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Forced marriage

Additional advice and support

Training Log

Full Safeguarding – Working Together

Julie Smith	June 2023
Suzie Hoefkens	July 2023
Clare Oliver	June 2023

Additional Training:

Clare Oliver:

The effects of drug/alcohol misuse on children	March 2015
The effects of mental health on children	May 2015
The effects of domestic violence on children	September 2015
Protective Behaviours	June 2016
Train the Trainer effects of domestic violence	June 2016
Supportive Play Therapy	January 2017
Neglect Conference	March 2017
CSE Conference	March 2017
Graded Care Profile	June 2017
Fathers Role in Safeguarding	October 2017
Attendance at DSL Forums	Ongoing
Emergency First Aid at Work	September 2022, August 2025
Prevent - DSL	September 2022
Brooke Traffic Light	September 2023
Neglect Conference	February 2024
Working Together to Safeguard Children	June 2023
Level 2 Safeguarding Children	January 2024
Safeguarding in Education	September 2024
Prevent	September 2024
Paediatric First Aid	April 2024
Administration of Medications	February 2023
Cyber Security	January 2024
Neglect	November 2024
FGM	January 2025
Prevent referral	September 2024
Domestic Abuse	October 2024
Fathers Inclusion	May 2025
PEP Training	October 2024

Julie Smith

Early Years Representative on BBSCBP	September 2022 - present
Safer Recruitment	September 2024
Prevent: Train the trainer and DSL	November 2020 and September 2022

Fire Warden 2025	September 2022, September
Level 2 Safeguarding Children	September 2023
Safeguarding in Education	September 2024
Administering Medication	February 2024
Cyber Security	January 2024
Prevent	October 2022
Corporate Parenting	June 2025
Trauma and Attachment	March 2025
Neglect	November 2024
FGM	September 2025
LADO and Reporting Allegations	October 2024

Suzie Hoefkens

Working Together to Safeguard Children	July 2023
Safer Recruitment	September 2022
Fire Warden	September 2023
Prevent – DSL	September 2022
Administering Medication	March 2024
Cyber Security	January 2024
Prevent	January 2023
Safeguarding in Education	November 2024
FGM	September 2025
Prevent Referrals	November 2024

One DDSL will attend the termly Bedford Borough DSL Forums.
The DSL is the Early Years representative for BBSCP and completes a termly assurance report as well as attending termly Strategic Board meeting.

Anna Browning

Working Together to Safeguard Children	March 2024
Fire Warden	December 2023
Administering Medication	May 2023
Level 2 Safeguarding	January 2024
Prevent	March 2023
Cyber Security	January 2024
FGM	September 2025
PEP training	October 2024

Alessandra Mastrandrea

Working Together to Safeguard Children	March 2024
Fire Warden	August 2024
Administering Medication	November 2023
Level 2 Safeguarding	January 2024
Prevent	September 2023
Cyber Security	January 2024
Trauma and Attachment	March 2025

Penny Stubbs

First Aid in the workplace

June 2022, August 2025

Safer Recruitment

August 2022

Fire Warden

August 2022, August 2025

Administering Medication

August 2022, August 2025

Level 2 Safeguarding Children

January 2024

Cyber Security

January 2024

Prevent

September 2024

All Staff – refer to Training Record held by Penny Stubbs

Updates:

Table of changes from KCSIE September 2024 version

Summary	About the guidance (no changes made)
Part one	Safeguarding information for all staff (no changes made)
Part two	The management of safeguarding
Page 36	Para 129 We have added a note to say that revised guidance on Relationships, Sex, and Health Education was published July 2025 for introduction September 2026
Page 38	Para 135 Updated to clarify misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories are safeguarding harms. Para 136 Removed hyphen from antisemitism
Page 40	Para 143 – Link added to the plan technology for your school service, which schools can use to assess themselves against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.
Page 41	Para 143 - Link added to DfE guidance on the use of generative AI in education (2025) at end of filtering and monitoring (FM) section to support schools and colleges.

	Para 144 – wording amended in the cybersecurity standards for schools and colleges advice to clarify that it was developed to help schools improve their cyber resilience.
Page 47	Paras 168-170 information added to clarify that it was developed to help schools improve its cyber resilience.
Page 49	Para 177 – updated to clarify ‘working together to safeguard attendance’ ‘is now ‘statutory’ guidance.
Pages 50 & 51	Paras 184-187- updated to remove references to funding grant support for SMHLs training as this programme has ended
Page 52	Para 190 split into paras 189 and 190 for cosmetic reasons only (to retain paragraph numbering)
Page 54	Para 199 has been amended to clarify that the role of the virtual head has been extended to include responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children in kinship care.
Page 56	Para 205 removal of ‘spectrum’ and ‘disorder’ to align with the SEND code of practice. Updated note: We expect to publish the revised guidance on gender questioning children soon. Once published we will signpost to this guidance in KCSIE 2025.

Part three	Safer recruitment
Page 73-74	Para 260 reference to TRA's Employer Access Service removed and replaced with new link to GOV.UK page.
Page 75	Para 266 references to TRA's Employer Access Service removed and replaced with new link to GOV.UK page.
Page 85	Para 319 reference to Employer Secure Access removed and replaced with link to GOV.UK for S128 checks.
Part four	Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors
Page 106	Para 422 amended to correct the title of the Information Commissioner's employment practice guidance.
Part five	Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment
Page 140	Para 545 – Link added to the Lucy Faithfull Foundation's ' Shore Space ', which offers a confidential chat service supporting young people concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviours.

Annexes A, B, C, D and E	
Annex B – page 157	We have updated the definition of extremism on page 157 to reflect the definition used within the Prevent guidance
Annex B – Page 163	Link added to the CSA Centre's Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse .
Annex B – Page 164	Link added to the Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation The Children's Society .
Annex B – Page 167 & 170	Updated links to National Crime Agency and CEOP following rebranding (Thinkuknow has been retired and replaced with CEOP Education)