



Barnard Castle School

ESTD 1883

Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025

Issue 1.0

This is a whole school policy including EYFS

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CONTENTS

PART 1 – Safeguarding Policy Statement	4
1.1 Aims of the Policy	4
1.2 Equal Opportunities Statement.....	5
PART 2 – Statutory Guidance	6
PART 3 – Key Safeguarding Contacts	8
3.1 Internal Contacts.....	8
3.2 External Contacts.....	10
PART 4 – Understanding Abuse and Safeguarding Risks	12
4.1 Child on Child Abuse	12
4.2 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment.....	13
4.3 Sharing Nudes or Semi-Nude Images/Videos	13
4.4 Online Safety	14
4.5 Mental Health.....	14
4.6 Absent or Missing from Education.....	14
4.7 Children who are Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm	15
PART 5 – Roles and Responsibilities	16
5.1 All Staff.....	16
5.2 DSLs and DDSLs	16
5.3 Core Pastoral Group.....	17
5.4 Governors.....	17
PART 6 – Promoting Welfare	19
6.1 Early Help	19
PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures	20
7.1 Responding to a Disclosure.....	20
7.2 Disclosure of Sexual Violence or Sexual Harassment.....	21
7.3 Disclosure of Sharing Nudes or Semi-Nude Images/Videos	22
7.4 General Concerns about a Child	22
7.5 Child is in Danger or at Risk of Harm	22
7.6 Child at Risk of Radicalisation	23
7.7 Female Genital Mutilation ('FGM').....	23
7.8 Persistent Absence or Missing from Education	23
7.9 Arrangements for Transition of Children when Changing School	24
7.10 Concerns or Allegations of Abuse made Against Staff Members	24
7.11 Concerns about Safeguarding Practices in the School.....	26
7.12 Working One to One with a Child	26
7.13 Arrangements for Visiting Speakers	26
7.14 Safer Recruitment	27
7.15 Recording Information.....	27



7.16 Sharing Information	27
7.17 Consent to Share Information	28
7.18 Information Technology Monitoring and Filtering	28
7.19 Off-Site Tuition	28
7.20 Use of School Premises for Non-School Activities	29
7.21 The Use of 'Reasonable Force' in School	30
PART 8 - Early Years Provision Safeguarding Arrangements:	31
8.1 DSL for the EYFS	31
8.2 Disqualification from Working in Childcare	31
8.3 Use of mobile phones and cameras	31
PART 9 - Training	32
9.1 Staff and Governors.....	32
9.2 DSLs/DDSLS	32
PART 10 - Safeguarding Guidance in the Event of Part or Whole Site Closures:	33
10.1 Context.....	33
10.2 Safeguarding priority.....	33
10.3 Safeguarding Partners' Advice.....	33
10.4 Roles and Responsibilities	33
10.5 Vulnerable Children	33
10.6 Increased Vulnerability or Risk	34
10.7 Attendance.....	34
10.8 Reporting Concerns about Children or Staff	34
10.9 Staff Training and Induction During Part or Whole Site Closures.....	34
10.10 Safer Recruitment/Volunteers and Movement of Staff	35
10.11 Child-on-child abuse.....	35
10.12 Online Safety.....	35
10.13 New Children at the School during Part or Whole-Site Closure	35
10.14 Supporting Children Not in School.....	36
APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:.....	37
APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT	39
APPENDIX 3 – ACTIONS WHERE THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD	47



PART 1 – Safeguarding Policy Statement

We are committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all pupils in our care. We believe that every child and young person should be protected from harm and have their well-being promoted and maintained at all times. The School recognises its duty to consider the best interests of the child to achieve the best outcomes. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of everyone at Barney. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

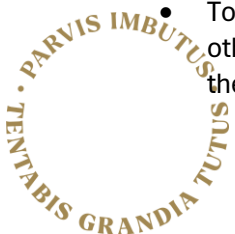
We provide a safe and supportive environment where all pupils can be happy and flourish. A flourishing pupil is one that reaches their potential in every endeavour; both in the classroom and beyond. We want every pupil to know who they can turn to for support. Every Barney pupil has an extensive team around them to support them in their journey. We want every pupil and every parent to “Be Part Of It”. By working in partnership with parents, we provide the best possible support for pupils, both in school and at home.

Feeling happy, safe and secure is vital to a fulfilling and rewarding time at school and providing effective pastoral care underpins everything we do. We provide an environment where every pupil is valued as an individual, can develop self-confidence, build lasting friendships, make the most of their talents and succeed academically.

This policy outlines the responsibilities of the school, staff members, governors, volunteers, students, and parents/guardians in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

1.1 Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that all staff recognise safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as *“protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes”* (KCSIE 2025).
- 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 the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- To promote the well-being of all children, including vulnerable groups, by providing clear information regarding relevant support services, pastoral care, and appropriate educational resources to enhance their physical, emotional, and mental health.
- To define the standard for a system of monitoring of those thought to be at risk of harm, and to ensure that we, the School, contribute to assessments of need and support for those children.
- To ensure that all staff members, volunteers, and governors working within the School have had the listed background checks prior to starting their position, in line with Safer Recruitment Guidelines, our Code of Conduct, and safeguarding training.
- To ensure all staff members, volunteers, and governors are equipped with the knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues, procedures, and reporting mechanisms.
- To encourage an environment of open communication where concerns about a child's welfare or safety can be raised and addressed promptly. All staff members, volunteers, and governors will be trained to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL, who will follow the appropriate procedures in line with local safeguarding guidelines.
- To highlight the importance of working closely with parents/guardians, external agencies, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure a coordinated approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 1 – Safeguarding Policy Statement

- To set specific dates for regular reviews of our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures to ensure they remain effective, relevant, and compliant with legal requirements and local safeguarding guidelines.
- To recognise the importance of confidentiality and data protection in safeguarding matters. Information will be handled securely and shared only on a need-to-know basis, following relevant data protection regulations.
- This policy applies to Barnard Castle School, ('the School'), which includes Barnard Castle Preparatory School (including non-registered EYFS).

1.2 Equal Opportunities Statement

In meeting its safeguarding obligations the School will be mindful of the obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which covers discrimination against a child or prospective child on grounds of sex, race, caste, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. All staff, volunteers and governors with responsibilities under this policy must take into account the Equal Opportunities Policy when discharging their duties.

Children with Disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges, including communication barriers and difficulty in overcoming these. Staff, volunteers and governors should guard against the assumption that certain behaviours, moods and injuries necessarily pertain to the child's disability without the need for further exploration and be aware that behaviours such as bullying may impact disproportionately upon a child with SEND without them necessarily displaying signs of this.



PART 2 – Statutory Guidance

The policy is updated annually in accordance with the following documents to reflect changes in legislation and best practice:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025) - Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (update August 2018)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners \(March 2015\)](#)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children updated December 2023 (A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children)
- [Ofsted’s Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges – 10 June 2021](#)
- [Education and Training \(Welfare of Children\) Act 2021](#)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners providing safeguarding services, May 2024
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales, (2023)
- The Prevent Duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities, September 2023
- UK Council for Internet Safety, “Education for a connected world” (2020)
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- DBS Referral Guidance (as may be amended from time to time)
- [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools - September 2022](#)
- Teacher Misconduct – [Teaching Regulation Agency \(TRA\)](#)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- [The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Protection of Freedom Act 2012
- The Children Act 2004
- Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013
- Information Commissioner’s Office Data Sharing Code of Practice, October 2022
- Multi-Agency Statutory Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation, July 2020
- Equality Act 2010 (Updated June 2015)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (DfE 2020)
- Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2017)
- Working together to improve school attendance: Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, February 2024
- Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges, March 2022, updated May 2024

The policy also takes into account the procedures and practice of Durham County Council as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP) 2019.

This policy operates in conjunction with other related School policies and procedures, covering areas such as:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Behaviour (Prep School)
- Behaviour (Senior School)
- Online safety
- Missing Children.
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0
PART 2 – Statutory Guidance

- ICT Acceptable Use
- Visiting Speaker
- Visitors (Staff Handbook)
- Whistleblowing

A glossary of terms and abbreviations used in this policy can be found in Appendix 21 at the end of the document.



PART 3 – Key Safeguarding Contacts

3.1 Internal Contacts

Safeguarding is “everyone’s responsibility” (KCSIE 2025), however, within School there are key staff members with additional responsibilities:

<p>Designated Safeguarding Leads</p> <p>(See Appendix 2 for DSL Job Description)</p>	<p>Mrs Caroline Riley Deputy Head (Pastoral) cjr@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 696076</p>	<p>Mrs Laura Turner Headmistress of Prep School, including EYFS let@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 696068</p>
<p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads</p>	<p>Mrs Olivia Isaac Director of Pastoral Care ojh@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 696067</p>	<p>Mrs Martine Chapman Prep School mlc@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 696032</p>
	<p>Mr Scott Edwards HSM of Old Courts tse@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	<p>Mr Edward Midcalf HSM of Marwood House eam@barneyschool.org.uk</p>
	<p>Mrs Janey Dolby HSM of Bowes House jd@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	<p>Mr Henry Fairwood HSM of Tees House hwf@barneyschool.org.uk</p>
	<p>Mr Joseph Pickering HSM of Dale House jap@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	<p>Mr David Riley HSM of Durham House dr@barneyschool.org.uk</p>
	<p>Mr William Chaloner HSM of York House whc@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	<p>Mr Barry Imms HSM of Northumberland House bdi@barneyschool.org.uk</p>
	<p>Mr Peter Lavery HSM of Longfield House pjl@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	
<p>Senior Leadership Contacts</p>	<p>Headmaster: Mr David Cresswell djc@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 696022</p>	<p>Second Master: Mr Martin Pepper mtp@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 696068</p>



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0
PART 3 – Key Safeguarding Contacts

	<p>Safeguarding Link Governor: Ms Donna Vinsome govdv@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 690222</p>	<p>Deputy Safeguarding Link Governor: Dr Jon Elphick govje@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 690222</p>
	<p>Deputy Head of Prep School: Mrs Sarah Leonard sml@barneyschool.org.uk 01833696032</p>	<p>Chair of Governors: Mrs Catherine Sunley govcjs@barneyschool.org.uk 01833 690222</p>
<p>Additional Pastoral Staff Core Group</p>	<p>School Nurses Mrs Suzanne Newbrook and Mrs Beth Cummins medical@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	<p>School Counsellor Mrs Emma Hickmans elh@barneyschool.org.uk</p>
	<p>Head of Academic Support Deborah Wafer daw@barneyschool.org.uk</p>	



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0
PART 3 – Key Safeguarding Contacts

3.2 External Contacts

As our pupils, both day and boarding, reside across a wide range of counties and countries we work in line with the procedures of each geographical area.

The Local Authorities listed below represent the majority of our children. The School will contact whichever authority is relevant to the children concerned.

<p>Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership (For children in School who live in County Durham [excluding Darlington])</p>	<p>First Contact: 03000 267 979 - Option 3. Professionals will be asked to complete a referral form: Guidance, toolkits and forms for Practitioners and email this to: firstcontact@durham.gov.uk Durham Local Authority Designated Officer (Durham duty LADO): 03000 268835</p>
<p>North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: (For children in School who live in North Yorkshire)</p>	<p>A written referral using the universal referral form must be completed and submitted within 24 hours of your telephone call. If you believe the situation is urgent but does not require the police, please call 01609 780780 (24 hours; emergency teams operate weekends and evenings) - you do not need to make a telephone contact prior to submitting a written referral should the situation not be urgent. Please send the completed referral form to Social.care@northyorks.gov.uk If you have access to an egress account, please send to Social.care@northyorks.gov.uk via egress. North Yorkshire Local Authority Designated Officer (NY LADO): Duty LADO: 01609 533080 A completed LADO referral form should be emailed to lado@northyorks.gov.uk</p>
<p>Darlington Safeguarding Partnership (For children in School who live in Darlington)</p>	<p>Children’s Initial Advice Team (CIAT) 01325 406252 / Out of Hours Emergency Duty team 01642 524552. Darlington Designated Officer (formerly known as LADO): 01325 406451 Information can subsequently be forwarded to the DO via secure email: designatedofficer@darlington.gov.uk</p>

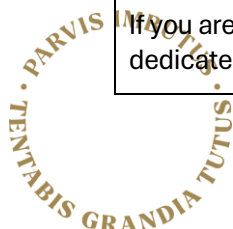


Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0
PART 3 – Key Safeguarding Contacts

<p>Westmorland and Furness Council (Formerly Cumbria)</p> <p>(For children in school who live in Westmorland and Furness, Cumbria)</p>	<p>CSPS (Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership). Complete the Single Contact Form, unless urgent.</p> <p>Safeguarding Hub and Emergency Duty Team: 0300 373 2724</p> <p>Cumbria Local Authority Designated Officer (Cumbria LADO)</p> <p>Complete a LADO Position of Trust Referral notification form and send to the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub:</p> <p>Tel: 03003 033892</p> <p>Email: lado@cumbria.gov.uk – document should be password protected.</p>
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Other key external safeguarding contacts that may be accessed are:

<p>Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service</p>
<p>Boarding Schools Association (BSA)</p> <p>The Boarding Schools' Association The Voice of Boarding Schools</p>
<p>Childline</p> <p>0800 1111</p>
<p>NSPCC</p> <p>0808 800 5000</p>
<p>NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line</p> <p>0800 028 0285</p> <p>help@nspcc.org.uk</p>
<p>Channel and Prevent</p> <p>You can refer an individual to the Channel process or report Prevent related information to the force Prevent team on 101 or via the website Prevent Durham Constabulary</p> <p>If you have concerns you may fill in a Prevent referral form (issued by the Prevent team) and send it via email (specific email provided for each case by the Prevent team).</p> <p>Prevent advice line: 0800 789 321</p> <p>The Department of Education has a dedicated telephone helpline to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism: 020 7340 7264</p>
<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)</p> <p>Anyone can report concerns about FGM to Durham police on the direct number 101.</p> <p>If you are worried a child is at risk of or has already had FGM, call the NSPCC free, anonymous dedicated FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550 or email fgm.help@nspcc.org.uk.</p>



PART 4 – Understanding Abuse and Safeguarding Risks

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Abuse can be:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect

See Appendix 2 of this policy for further detail of the types of abuse and possible signs of abuse.

4.1 Child on Child Abuse

The School has a zero-tolerance approach to **child-on-child** abuse. All children are made aware through assemblies, displays and staff interaction of the systems in place for them to report abuse. The School recognises that, even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, this doesn't mean it is not happening within the School and vigilance will remain high. Staff are trained to recognise that young people may not always make a direct report and information may come from overheard conversations or observed behaviour changes and the message of "it could happen here" is reinforced during INSET.

All staff are made aware through training and updates that children can abuse other children. Child-on-child abuse is abuse by one or more children against another child. It can manifest itself in many ways and can include (but is not limited to):

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may stand alone or part of a wider pattern of abuse;
- upskirting – the Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- sharing nudes or semi-nude images/video (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

When dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse, the school's DSLs will at all times pay due regard to advice in Part 5 of KCSIE 2025.



4.2 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEND and LGBTQIA+ children are at greater risk.

The School will ensure that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Staff are made aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”. Staff are aware through training that downplaying such behaviours can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment for children and young people and a culture that normalises abuse;
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Definitions of **sexual violence**, including rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and consent, are made clear in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and in [KCSIE September 2025 Annex A](#). School staff are aware of what constitutes sexual violence and the fact that children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way.

When referring to **sexual harassment** KCSIE 2025 defines this as ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (School should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying;
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats and
 - upskirting (as described above) - this is now a criminal offence;
 - displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
 - coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they’re not comfortable with online.

4.3 Sharing Nudes or Semi-Nude Images/Videos

(also known as Sexting or Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 4 – Understanding Abuse and Safeguarding Risks

Under British law it is legal to have sex aged 16 and over. But it is illegal and a serious criminal offence to take, hold or share indecent photos of anyone aged under 18 – even if the person who has the image is under 18 themselves. It also does not matter whether they are boyfriend or girlfriend. Not only could the person be prosecuted, but they could be required by law to register as a sex offender.

4.4 Online Safety

We believe it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We provide an effective whole School approach to online safety (see Online Safety Policy). We aim to protect and educate our pupils and staff in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

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, misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism.
- **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 reasons
- **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.

4.5 Mental Health

Through training, staff are made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Whilst only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, staff 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.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they should take immediate action by speaking to a DSL/DDSL, who will then take the lead on contact with appropriate services and/or local safeguarding partnerships.

Further information and advice regarding Mental Health support can be found in appendix 2.

4.6 Absent or Missing from Education

The School recognises that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. This policy ensures that there are clear procedures to manage persistently absent pupils and aims to prevent the risk that a child may go missing from education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 4 – Understanding Abuse and Safeguarding Risks

4.7 Children who are Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Whilst **all** children should be protected, we recognise that some groups of children, are potentially at greater risk of harm than others (both online and offline). The list below, is not exhaustive, but highlights some of those groups:

- Children who need a social worker e.g. Child in Need or Child Protection Plans
- Children absent from education for prolonged or repeated periods of time
- Those requiring mental health support
- Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children
- Children with disabilities or health issues
- Members of the LGBT community (KCSIE 2025).



PART 5 – Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 All Staff

All Staff (*the term 'staff' refers to all adults within the School*) are expected:

- to attend safeguarding training when provided
- to complete all online courses requested that will aid or improve their knowledge of safeguarding
- to read the annually updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1
- to be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect
- to understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and **online**.
- to exercise **professional curiosity**, knowing what to look for to support **early identification** of abuse and neglect, so they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection
- to 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 (children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened)
- to show awareness that vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers can have a profound impact on safeguarding
- to understand that children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families and that extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.
- to be aware of the School safeguarding procedures including the requirement to reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported
- to be familiar with this policy and The School's Code of Conduct which is shared at induction and can be found in the Staff Handbook
- to seek support from a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy if unsure at any point
- to follow advice given from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy

5.2 DSLs and DDSLs

The School's DSLs are Mrs Caroline Riley and Mrs Laura Turner who are members of the Senior Management Team.

Their responsibilities include:

- to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the School, including online safety
- to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the School
- to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies
- to support staff in carrying out their safeguarding duties
- to ensure that **all** staff are updated on statutory guidance and receive training thereon
- to monitor the effectiveness of the School's policies and procedures in practice, acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for **all** staff
- to work with the Governors to review and update the School's Safeguarding Policy
- where a child leaves the School, the DSLs will also ensure their safeguarding file is transferred to the new school (separately from the main child file) within five school days.
- to regularly review the School's and their own practices and concerns about welfare and safeguarding matters



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 5 – Roles and Responsibilities

Ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSLs and this responsibility should not be delegated.

The School's DDSLs are Housemasters and Housemistresses in the Senior School and a member of teaching staff in Prep School.

In the absence of one DSL, the other will firstly deputise, or the DDSLs will deputise, as available. For out of School activities/hours, staff will contact either DSL, or the DDSL, initially by phone or email, in order to discuss safeguarding concerns, should they arise.

During term time, the DSLs/DDSLS will always be available (during School hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. For out of hours/out of term activities, the School's arrangements are that the DSLs can be reached by email or by mobile phone daily and the most appropriate or most easily available DSL will respond to and deal with any incident immediately, contacting the Head if and as necessary. Personal mobile telephone numbers for DSLs are kept in the School offices and by the Head and may be used in out of hours/out of term times.

Full details of the DSLs'/DDSLS' role can be found at Annex C of KCSIE 2025.

5.3 Core Pastoral Group

The School Core Pastoral Group, which meets on a weekly basis, is made up of:

- The DSL's
- School Nurses
- Head of Sixth Form
- School Counsellor
- Head of Academic Support

This group ensures open and appropriate sharing of information that supports the safeguarding and wellbeing of children in our care, according to the principles outlined in HM Government's [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#) (May 2024). The School acknowledges that the School Nurses' support in safeguarding children is guided by the NMC's document: [The Code – Professional Standards of Practice and Behaviour for Nurses, Midwives and Nursing Associates](#). In instances where sharing information in the School setting appears to contradict The Code's guidance, the DSLs should be consulted and the responsibility for whether to share sensitive information with key pastoral staff passed to them.

5.4 Governors

Mrs Donna Vinsome is the Governor designated to take a lead in relation to responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements in the School. She is a member of the Governing Body and is supported in this role by Dr Jon Elphick.

The Governing Body recognises its vital role in safeguarding and all governors receive annual safeguarding training. Safeguarding is on the agenda of every full governors meeting, where the designated Safeguarding Governor and DSL update the board on key developments and trends, and provide assurance of the ongoing effectiveness of the schools procedures in dealing with the safeguarding events.

Annually, the Governing body reviews and approves the update of this Safeguarding Policy.

Every term, the Designated Safeguarding Governor and DSL present a safeguarding report for the previous term to the Education, Welfare and Staff Development Committee, which summarise all safeguarding events in the previous term, an assessment of the school's response and any trends that have become apparent.

The Education, Welfare and Staff Development Committee also checks that all children are taught about safeguarding through the curriculum and PSHE/Head Space, including the curriculum for

Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 5 – Roles and Responsibilities

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. The committee monitors that the children are being helped to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks, build resilience and counter the threat of radicalisation. This includes teaching children about the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet and the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Internet safety is an integral part of the School's ICT curriculum and is also embedded in PSHE/HeadSpace, including RSE and Health Education.

In addition, the Education, Welfare and Staff Development Committee ensures the School has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

The designated Safeguarding Governor and DSL meet on a regular basis to review ongoing safeguarding events, so that the Designated Safeguarding Governor can be assured that the school's processes are operating correctly.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the Designated Safeguarding Governor will ensure that the School has worked with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.



PART 6 – Promoting Welfare

We believe that the School should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. Children should be helped to develop their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, especially in the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet. This includes resilience to radicalisation.

Children are taught about safeguarding through the HeadSpace and Assembly programme. The age appropriate curriculum teaches children about the risks posed by adults and young people who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children and young people. From September 2020 the PSHE curriculum includes Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in line with mandatory Government regulations. Internet safety is embedded in the School's ICT and HeadSpace curricula.

All staff act in loco parentis and should therefore aim to act as a reasonable parent would. Staff should be approachable and friendly but there is a line which teachers should not cross. Staff should be consistent, open and honest.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children, including a focus on British Values, is actively promoted throughout the School. This includes curriculum subjects, extracurricular activities and in the furtherance of the School's ethos through chapel services, themed assemblies and child elected School Councils.

The promotion of fundamental British Values, coined by the Prevent Strategy, aims to prevent political indoctrination of children through the curriculum. Any prejudiced views are challenged as a matter of course.

The School encourages the children in its care to raise **any** concerns that they might have and ensures that these are taken seriously. The School also encourages children to contribute their own ideas, according to their age and understanding, about how their safety and welfare could be further improved. This is done through the School Council, the Anti-Bullying Committee, Assemblies, posters, fortnightly student-led panels and the HeadSpace programme.

6.1 Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. The School recognises that children may benefit most from early intervention and has arrangements for listening to children and providing early help. **All** staff have received training (currently provided by regular staff updates, led by the DSLs) on the necessity to identify children who may benefit from early help, being aware of the early help process and understanding their role in it.

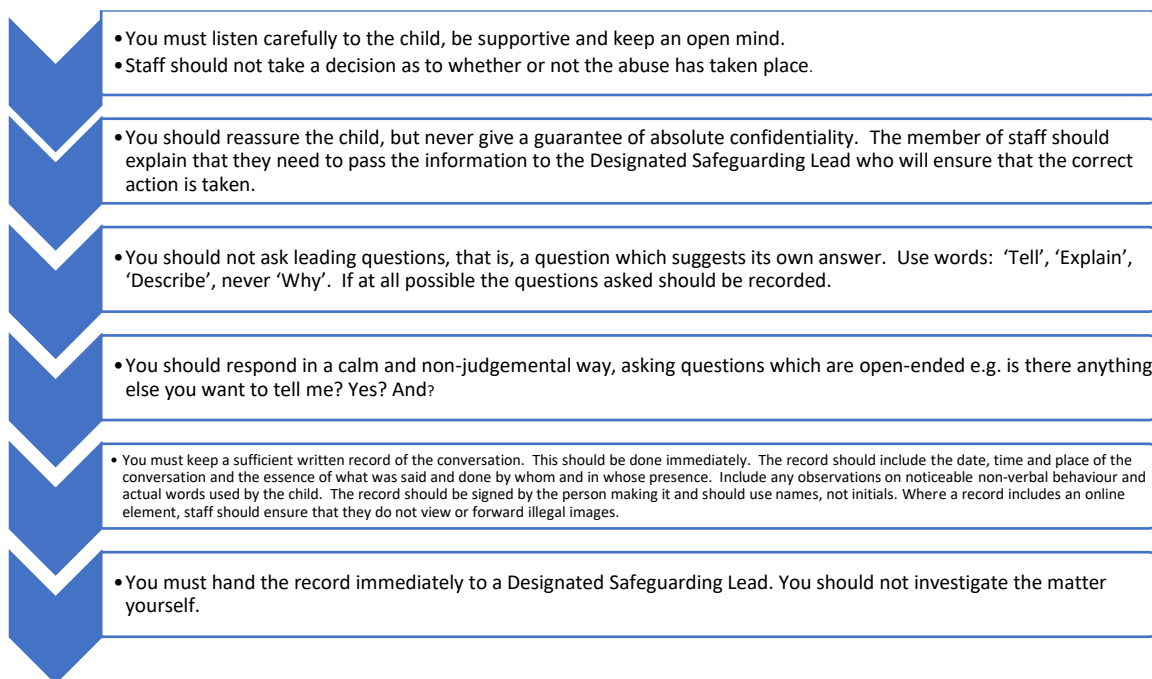
Staff are required to speak to a DSL /DDSL as soon as **any** concerns arise in order to discuss strategies for help and agree a course of action. The DSL/DDSL will, where appropriate, support staff and take the lead in liaising with other agencies, setting up interagency assessments, as appropriate. If early support is identified, the DSLs will take the lead in keeping this under constant review and refer the case to local authority children's social care if appropriate. This may involve referral to specialist services.



PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

7.1 Responding to a Disclosure

If staff suspect or hear an allegation or complaint of abuse or neglect from a child or any third party, they must follow the procedure below. A child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. Through training, staff are provided with the following guidance:

- 
- You must listen carefully to the child, be supportive and keep an open mind.
• Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
 - You should reassure the child, but never give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will ensure that the correct action is taken.
 - You should not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer. Use words: 'Tell', 'Explain', 'Describe', never 'Why'. If at all possible the questions asked should be recorded.
 - You should respond in a calm and non-judgemental way, asking questions which are open-ended e.g. is there anything else you want to tell me? Yes? And?
 - You must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. This should be done immediately. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. Include any observations on noticeable non-verbal behaviour and actual words used by the child. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. Where a record includes an online element, staff should ensure that they do not view or forward illegal images.
 - You must hand the record immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. You should not investigate the matter yourself.

This advice has been replicated in a leaflet given to **all** staff and is given at **all** staff induction training. Both staff induction training and ongoing staff training include CPD aimed at helping the School monitor the level of understanding that staff have retained following INSET training and refreshers.

Staff are encouraged to use the following phrases when meeting with a child who has disclosed abuse :

- **“I believe you”**. Children rarely lie about abuse (especially sexual abuse) although the role of the member of staff is not to determine the validity of the disclosure.
- **“It’s not your fault”**. It is always the adult’s responsibility – but the member of staff should avoid condemning the alleged abuser – especially if it is a family member.
- **“I’m glad you told me”**. Children who talk about their concerns are less likely to be seriously affected.
- **“I’m sorry this happened to you”**.
- **“I’m going to try to help you”**. BUT staff should NOT make promises which they may not be able to keep – especially with regard to confidentiality – disclosures must be reported and staff must not make blanket claims, e.g. they should avoid saying phrases such as “Everything will be all right”.

Both Staff Common Rooms (Senior and Prep) host a Safeguarding Notice Board, on which updates to policy, as well as key training information is displayed.

All concerns, discussions and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures are recorded in writing. Staff are trained to include the date, time and place of the conversation and include details of what was said by the child in the child’s own wording as far as possible. If this record is initially made on paper, it must be signed by the member of staff and referred to a DSL/DDSL as soon as possible following the conversation. This information will subsequently be logged by the staff member on the

Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

confidential, electronic reporting system. In other instances the staff member may log the record directly on to the confidential, electronic reporting system. The electronic reporting system will alert the DSL's via email however it remains the member of staff's responsibility to ensure the DSL has seen the alert in a timely manner.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure, as far as is possible, that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The DSL, in making decisions, will discuss with the child the actions to follow and listen to the wishes of the child during this process. The School operates its procedures with the best interests of the individual child at their heart.

7.2 Disclosure of Sexual Violence or Sexual Harassment

In addition to the procedure defined above for managing a disclosure, where the disclosure involves sexual violence or sexual harassment the staff member must ensure that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem in reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. The staff member will explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

The DSL will, where there has been a report of sexual violence, make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that, in line with guidance in Part Five of KCSIE 2025, the DSL will inform police.

The need for a risk assessment will be considered. The risk and needs assessment will refer to

- the victim, especially their protection and support
- the alleged perpetrator; and
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate in order to protect them.

Risk assessments will be recorded and kept under review by the DSL. The DSL will liaise with the Safeguarding Children Partnership, police and specialist services, as required.

The School recognises that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and are alert to the potential for child-on-child abuse. **Where there is suspicion of abuse between children, the School recognises the importance of rapid investigation and protection of all parties involved.** This may include separation and additional supervision. Victims of child-on-child abuse will be supported by the School in the same way as for all allegations of abuse. The School also has an Anti-Bullying Policy.

The possibility of child-on-child abuse is minimised by:

- an open atmosphere of mutual trust among the School community, especially within the boarding community;
- experienced boarding staff;
- good staffing provision and supervision;

Although relationships may develop, the School forbids sexual acts between children at School.

Where an issue of child behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm', staff should follow the procedures below rather than the School's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies:

A child against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation. The School will take advice from the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and/or the police on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all children involved including the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator. If it is

Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

necessary for a child to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and/or the police, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the children involved are supported during the interview by an appropriate adult and until the investigation is completed. Confidentiality will be an important consideration for the School and advice will be sought as necessary from the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and/or directly with the Police, as appropriate.

In the event of disclosures about child-on-child abuse, all children involved (both victim and alleged perpetrator) will be treated as being at risk and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. Victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported through the School's pastoral network of DSL/House Tutors/School Counsellor, as necessary, and support from external agencies will be sought, as appropriate.

7.3 Disclosure of Sharing Nudes or Semi-Nude Images/Videos

(also known as Sexting or Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery is brought to a member of staff's attention, they should follow the steps above for dealing with a disclosure and then refer the incident to the DSL immediately. The DSL may then call a review meeting with relevant member(s) of staff, before speaking to the children involved. Parents should be informed as early as possible in the process unless there is a sound reason not to do so, e.g., if the child could be harmed as a result.

If there is a risk that the child has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made immediately to Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership and/or directly to the Police. Whilst the person most likely to make a referral is one of the DSLs, anyone is entitled to make a referral.

7.4 General Concerns about a Child

If staff (including governors, contractors and volunteers) have **any** concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger or following a disclosure), they should speak with one of the School's DSLs to agree a course of action, although staff can make a direct referral to local authority children's social care. If in exceptional circumstances both DSLs are unavailable, staff should refer to one of the School's DDSLs, or, if unavailable, consider speaking to a member of the Senior Management Team. If anyone other than a DSL/DDSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. If a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press local authority children's social care for reconsideration. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with a DSL and local authority children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded on the confidential, electronic reporting system, followed up with one of the DSLs.

7.5 Child is in Danger or at Risk of Harm

If staff (including governors, agency staff and volunteers) believe that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, they should make an immediate referral to local authority children's social care and/or the Police. Anyone can make a referral. Any such referral must be made immediately and in any event within 24 hours (one working day) of staff being aware of the risk. Parental consent is not needed for referrals to statutory agencies such as the police and local authority children's social care.

If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and local authority children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded via the confidential, electronic reporting system and followed up with a DSL.



7.6 Child at Risk of Radicalisation

Staff should follow the School's normal referral processes by speaking to one of the DSLs immediately when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. There may be a referral made to Channel or Local Authority Children's Social Care depending on the level of risk. Coordinated by the police, Channel provides multi-agency support operating within a 'pre-criminal space' in order to deal with concerns proportionately.

Contact details are provided above in the External Contacts Section.

(See **Appendix 2** for indicators for the early identification of safeguarding risks to protect and divert young people away from the risks of radicalisation.)

The School, in recognition that children may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism or other forms of extremism, carries out appropriate risk assessments (following consultation with local partners, such as the Police) of the potential risk in the local area. Such risk assessments are discussed with the Headteacher, DSLs and Governors responsible for safeguarding to ensure the School's safeguarding arrangements are sufficiently robust to help prevent and protect children from being drawn into terrorism and are regularly revised. Prevent training is provided to **all** staff.

7.7 Female Genital Mutilation ('FGM')

There is a specific legal duty on teachers to report to the Police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. They should still discuss any such case with the DSL and involve Local Authority Children's Social Care as appropriate. (Appendix 2 of this policy give further information about FGM and procedures to be followed where a child may be at risk.)

Contact details are provided above in the External Contacts Section.

7.8 Persistent Absence or Missing Education

All staff are aware of their responsibilities to maintain timely registers. The School has an Admissions Register, as well as daily registration points. The whole School conducts a morning and afternoon registration and in Senior School there is also registration by lesson and an end of day registration prior to extra-curricular activities commencing. Where children are marked as "not present" SMT are alerted, relevant staff are emailed to double check attendance and administrative staff take appropriate action to gain a reason for the pupil's absence/non-attendance. To aid this process, every child has at least 2 emergency contact numbers listed in iSAMS.

School attendance registers are carefully monitored monthly by SMT to identify any trends, as per our Attendance Policy. The School will inform the local authority (and the local authority where the child is normally resident) of any child who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 School days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the School and the local authority.

In accordance with Working together to improve school attendance: Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2024) and The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, as part of ongoing staff training, staff are made aware of the difference between **persistent absence** and **missing education** and are trained to be vigilant of signs of absence from School specifically for potential travel to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. For information specific to processes for dealing with missing children from School, please refer to the School's 'Missing Children Policy'.

The School informs the Local Authority of any child who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Child Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). This will assist the local authority to:



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

- a) fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education; and
- b) follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or radicalisation.

Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a child from School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

7.9 Arrangements for Transition of Children when Changing School

Where children leave the School, the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college within five school days, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt.

In preparation for new children arriving at the School, the DSL will contact schools to ask for safe transferral of child protection files.

In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will 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 and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

7.10 Concerns or Allegations of Abuse made Against Staff Members

(including the Head, Governors and Volunteers)

The School's procedures for managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff who are currently working in the School follows Department for Education statutory guidance and Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and applies when staff (including volunteers) have (or are alleged to have):

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicated that they would pose a risk of harm if they were to work regularly or closely with children.

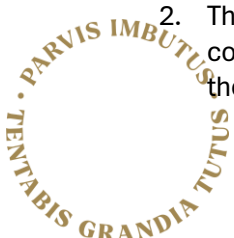
Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the Police. Historical (non-recent) allegations of abuse should also be referred to the Police.

If an allegation is made against anyone working with children in the School, the School will not undertake their own investigation of allegations without prior consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or, in the most serious cases, the Police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. The LADO will provide advice and guidance to schools and colleges when considering allegations against adults working with children. The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, local authority children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

In some cases the School may first discuss informally with the Designated Officer on a no-names basis.

All allegations will be investigated as a priority to avoid any delay.

1. All allegations which appear to meet any of the above reporting criteria are to be reported straight away to the Head or to a DSL. If an allegation is reported to the DSL, the DSL will keep the Head informed and vice versa. Where the Head or DSL is absent, reports may be made directly to the Chair of Governors. Where the Head or DSL is the subject of the allegation or concern, reports must be made to the Chair of Governors. In this instance the Head / DSL must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the Chair of Governors and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
2. The Head will immediately discuss the allegation with the LADO and consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the Police. (Where the Head deems there to be an immediate risk to children or there is



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

evidence of a possible criminal offence, they will involve the Police immediately.) All discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child(ren) agreed and retained. The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to the School's attention and appear to meet the criteria or that are made directly to the Police and/or local authority children's social care.

3. The Head will ensure that the individual who is the subject of the allegation is informed as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course or action, unless there is an objection by local authority children's social care or the Police. The Head will appoint a named representative to keep the individual informed of the progress of the case and will consider what other support is appropriate for the individual.
4. The Head should give careful consideration as to whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place until the allegation is resolved. Due weight will be given to the views of the LADO and KCSIE 2025 when making a decision about suspension. Where the individual is suspended, the LADO will ensure they know who their point of contact is in the School and shall provide them with their contact details.
5. Where a member of boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation, the LADO will consider whether arrangements for alternative accommodation away from children should be made.
6. The Head will ensure that parents are informed as soon as possible and kept informed about progress of the case, subject to any advice from local authority children's social care or the Police.
7. The Head will discuss with the LADO whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) should be made where an allegation is substantiated, and the person is dismissed or the School ceases to use their services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services.
8. The School has a legal obligation to report promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. Referrals should be made as soon as possible, and ordinarily on conclusion of an investigation, when an individual is removed from regulated activity. If an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation prior to dismissal of a member of teaching staff specifically, the School must consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence).
9. On conclusion of the case, the Head will review the circumstances of the case with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's safeguarding procedures or practices to help prevent similar events in the future. The Head will also report the details of the above process to the Chair of Governors.

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

Allegations found to be malicious will be removed from the individual's personnel records and destroyed. In all other circumstances a written record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file in accordance with KCSIE 2025 and a copy will only be provided to the individual concerned.

Allegations proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references. If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether any



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

disciplinary action is appropriate against a child who made it; or whether the Police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible even if they are not a child.

In all cases where there are concerns or allegations of abuse, the School will make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission whenever the Commission's guidelines deem it appropriate to do so.

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff, governor or volunteer that does not meet the threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the School's **Low Level Concerns Policy**.

7.11 Concerns about Safeguarding Practices in the School

The School aims to ensure there is a culture of safety and raising concerns and an attitude of '**it could happen here**'. Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the School's safeguarding regimes, these should be raised in accordance with the School's whistleblowing procedures which can be found in the School's Whistleblowing Policy. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report, provided that it is done in good faith.

The member of staff or volunteer should bring their concerns to the attention of one of the DSLs, or in a case where the concerns relate to the actions or inaction of the DSLs, to the Head.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue through the School's channels, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels (e.g. the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline) may be open to them. Contact details for the NSPCC helpline can be found in the External Contacts above

7.12 Working One to One with a Child

There are some occasions where a member of staff may be required to work on a one to one basis with a child e.g. visiting music teachers or sports coaches. In this situation staff are made aware:

- of the need to keep all actions open and clear
- to work within sight or sound of other adults where possible
- avoid closed doors unless the door has a clear glass panel
- avoid any physical contact with children

7.13 Arrangements for Visiting Speakers

The School has clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable. The School's responsibility to children is to ensure that they can critically assess the information they receive as to its value to themselves, and that the information is aligned to the ethos and values of the School and British values.

The School undertakes rigorous checklist (coordinated through the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Events Coordinator) before agreeing to a Visiting Speaker being allowed to attend the School. This will take into account any vetting requirements considered appropriate in the circumstances, and may include a DBS check if relevant.

Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that, where appropriate, their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these. In some cases, the School may request a copy of the Visiting Speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session being provided. Visiting speakers will be provided with links to this safeguarding policy and the School's Visiting Speaker Policy and will be asked to read the policies in advance of their visit.

Visiting Speakers, whilst on the School site, will be supervised by a School employee. On attending the School, Visiting Speakers will be required to show original current identification documents including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence. The School shall also keep a formal register



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 7 – Barnard Castle School Safeguarding Procedures

of visiting speakers retained in line with its Data Protection Policy. Unsupervised volunteers whose presence is regular and frequent will be subject to the usual DBS checks.

7.14 Safer Recruitment

The School is committed to safer recruitment processes. Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work, for example, right to work checks, additional overseas checks (if necessary), verifying identity, taking up references, checking work history and confirming medical fitness for the role. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate.

A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment and a risk assessment put in place. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the School may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

The School will conduct online searches of candidates and may ask candidates to provide social media handles.

Full details of the School's Safer Recruitment procedures for checking the suitability of staff, Governors and volunteers to work with children and young people is set out in the School's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

7.15 Recording Information

The School has a clear system for how information is organised and stored.

In both Senior and Prep School, pastoral concerns, confidential pastoral information and safeguarding concerns are recorded in CPOMS. The DSL automatically receives notifications of entries into this register and is able to direct visibility (for sharing purposes) to appropriate pastoral staff. Records entered into CPOMS include a write-up of the incident, actions taken, resolutions and any follow-up actions required. Additional evidence may be uploaded and additions added to the report at a later date as required. Records are clearly categorised and visibility is limited to those with a need for viewing rights.

7.16 Sharing Information

In sharing information related to the safeguarding of children in our care, staff should refer to the following principles, which are set out in [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#).

The School considers SMT, HSMs, Nurses, the School Counsellor and the Head of Learning Support as staff members that may require access to sensitive information in order “to do their job effectively and make informed decisions”.

The above may require information to “keep a child or individual at risk safe from neglect or physical, emotional or mental harm”, or if it is to protect a child’s “physical, mental, or emotional well-being.”

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully; they are not a barrier to sharing information, where the failure to do so would cause the safety or well-being of a child to be compromised.

When sharing information, staff should consider the following (STAAR):

- **Secure:** Wherever possible, information should be shared in an appropriate, secure way. Sensitive information will be shared by the DSL using CPOMS, setting visibility appropriately.
- **Timely:** Information should be shared in a timely fashion to reduce the risk of missed opportunities to offer support and protection to a child. Timeliness is key in emergency



situations and it may not be appropriate to seek consent for information sharing if it could cause delays and, therefore, place a child or young person at increased risk of harm.

- **Adequate:** Information should be adequate for its purpose. Information should be of the right quality to ensure that it can be understood and relied upon.
- **Accurate:** Information should be accurate and up to date and should clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. If the information is historical then this should be explained.
- **Record:** Information sharing decisions should be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share, on CPOMS. If the decision is to share, reasons should be cited including what information has been shared and with whom, in line with organisational procedures. If the decision is not to share, it is good practice to record the reasons for this decision and discuss them with the requester.

7.17 Consent to Share Information

The Data Protection Act 2018 includes ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ as a condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent.

Information can be shared legally without consent if a practitioner is unable to or cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent from the individual, or if to gain consent could place a child at risk.

7.18 Information Technology Monitoring and Filtering

The School has appropriate **filters** (systems to block children accessing internet based content deemed to be inappropriate or harmful) **and monitoring systems** (robust systems for checking information provided from the filtering systems and using this information to spot trends and guide proactive action) in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online. These systems are informed in part by the Prevent Risk Assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

The School:

- identifies and assigns roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- reviews filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- blocks harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

All staff are made aware, through training, of the difference between filters and monitoring in this context and are clear on who is responsible for monitoring and filtering systems.

The School subscribes to an internet filtering system with the facility to control and filter website content deemed inappropriate. Filters in place are relevant to the age and stage of development of the children. Time available for use of the internet is controlled according to age. Such systems aim to reduce the risk of children being exposed to illegal, inappropriate and harmful materials online; reduce the risk of children being subjected to harmful online interaction with others and help manage online behaviour that can increase a child's likelihood of, or causing, harm. Further detail of the School's approach to online safety can be found in the School's [E-safety policy](#), which also includes detail on the use of mobile technology and the School's IT arrangements to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet through the School's systems.

7.19 Off-Site Tuition

Please refer to the procedures within the School's ‘Educational Visits Policy’ for details regarding additional measures taken to safeguard children for off-site tuition or performances away from the School.



7.20 Use of School Premises for Non-School Activities

Barnard Castle School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This commitment extends to all areas of school life, including the use of school facilities by external organisations through commercial lettings and enterprise activity.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025), the School recognises its responsibility to ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place whenever the premises are used by third parties. This includes activities that take place outside of normal school hours or are not directly supervised by school staff.

This applies to all lettings and enterprise-related activities involving external individuals or organisations, whether for community, educational, or commercial purposes. It covers the use of school buildings, Boarding Houses, sports facilities, and other areas of the site.

Safeguarding Requirements for Hirers

All hirers must:

- Sign the School's Safeguarding Agreement for Hirers, based on the School's Enterprise Association Safeguarding Framework model.
- Provide a copy of their safeguarding policy, including the name and contact details of their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and procedures for reporting concerns and allegations.
- Submit a risk assessment appropriate to the activity, reviewed annually or in response to changes.
- Confirm that all staff and volunteers have undergone appropriate safer recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS checks, barred list checks, and right to work verification.
- Ensure that all staff have received safeguarding training relevant to their role and are familiar with the requirements of KCSIE 2025.
- Maintain a register of all staff and participants, including emergency contact and medical information.
- Comply with the Prevent Duty and ensure that no activity promotes extremism, hatred, or intolerance.
- Adhere to the School's expectations regarding online conduct, supervision, and use of facilities.

The School reserves the right to carry out spot checks and to exclude any individual deemed unsuitable to be on site. Any safeguarding concerns or allegations must be reported to the school's DSL within 24 hours to be managed in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Oversight and Compliance

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) retains oversight of all safeguarding matters related to enterprise and lettings. The school will use the SEA's Multiple-Use Safeguarding Risk Assessment (MUSRA) to assess and mitigate site-wide risks when multiple groups are present.

Failure to comply with the safeguarding requirements outlined will be treated as a material breach of the hire agreement and may result in immediate termination.



7.21 The Use of ‘Reasonable Force’ in School

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in Schools to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term ‘reasonable force’ covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. ‘Reasonable’ in these circumstances means ‘using no more force than is needed’. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between children or blocking a child’s path, or active physical contact such as leading a child by the arm out of the classroom.

The decision on whether or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 8 - Early Years Provision Safeguarding Arrangements:

PART 8 - Early Years Provision Safeguarding Arrangements:

8.1 DSL for the EYFS

The practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the Early Years settings is Mrs Laura Turner.

8.2 Disqualification from Working in Childcare

Where staff work in, or are involved in the management of, the School's Early Years or provision of care of children under the age of eight, the School will take steps to check whether those staff are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006, including by association with others. This forms part of the School's safer recruitment practices, further details of which can be found in the School's Safer Recruitment policy.

The School records all checks of staff employed to work in or manage relevant childcare on the Single Central Register. This includes the date disqualification checks were completed.

Where a member of staff is found to be disqualified, or if there is doubt over that issue then, pending resolution, the School will remove them from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. Suspension or dismissal will not be an automatic response; the School will consider if there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risks and taking advice from the LADO when appropriate.

8.3 Use of mobile phones and cameras

The School's policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras in the Early Years setting can be found in the School's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement. Only School cameras and School iPad/tablets are to be used in EYFS and these are not to be removed from School.

Staff must not use their own mobile phones or other cameras to take photographs within the EYFS setting.

All staff in the EYFS are required to adhere to the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement and specifically to ensure that any images taken of children are appropriate and stored and managed safely.



PART 9 - Training

9.1 Staff and Governors

All induction and training are in line with advice from Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership. All new staff and governors are provided with induction training that includes:

- the safeguarding policy, including information about the identity and role of the DSLs.
- the staff code of conduct, including the School's whistleblowing procedure and the acceptable use of technologies policy, staff/child relationships and communications including the use of social media (Staff Handbook)
- a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE 2025.
- School leaders, all staff and governors will also be required to read and understand Annex A of KCSIE Sept 2025.

All staff and governors are also at least annually required to:

- Read Part One of KCSIE 2025 and confirm that they have done so. Records are kept on the Single Central Record.
- Attend INSET or training each time Part One of KCSIE 2025 is updated by the Department for Education.
- Understand key information contained in Part One of KCSIE 2025 and complete online assessments. Completion of these assessments are monitored by the DSLs and records are kept on the SCR.
- Complete or attend additional training related to safeguarding and child protection, in line with advice from the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership. Training will include online safety, Prevent awareness and any other topic deemed relevant.

9.2 DSLs/DDSs

The DSLs/DDSs receive updated child protection training at least every two years to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This includes local inter-agency working protocols, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, identifying children at risk of radicalisation, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children and training in the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership's approach to Prevent duties.

In addition to their formal training, the DSLs'/DDSs' knowledge and skills are updated at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role, through attendance at courses, conferences, meetings, emails etc.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 10 - Safeguarding Guidance in the Event of Part or Whole Site Closures:

PART 10 - Safeguarding Guidance in the Event of Part or Whole Site Closures:

10.1 Context

During and following on from the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21, the way schools operate in response to part or whole site closure is fundamentally different to business as usual. The COVID-19 Appendix created in March 2020 now forms part of this document.

10.2 Safeguarding priority

In the event of part of whole site closure the safeguarding of all children at our School – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first
- if anyone in our School has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

10.3 Safeguarding Partners' Advice

In the event of part or whole site closure, the School will continue to work closely with Durham Safeguarding Children Partnerships, ensuring consistency with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and local authority children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need. Updates to advice given will be reviewed with this policy on a weekly basis and feedback provided to the Governance Committee.

10.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our School remain in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

If possible, at least one DSL or DDSL will be available on site. Where this is not possible, our DSLs will be available by phone and/or online video.

Where our DSLs cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the School takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

10.5 Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend School, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does not want their child to attend School, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a School place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers,

Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 10 - Safeguarding Guidance in the Event of Part or Whole Site Closures:

therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

We will encourage our vulnerable children to attend School, including remotely if needed.

Senior leaders in our School, especially the DSLs know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving local authority children's social care support.

10.6 Increased Vulnerability or Risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as a global pandemic, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of children's work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the potential impact of part or whole site closure measures on mental health of children and their parents and carers and will contact either of the DSLs if they have any concerns.

10.7 Attendance

Where a child is expected but does not arrive at School, or persistently fails to engage with the School remotely, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. The Tutor (Senior School) and Class Teacher (Prep School) will follow-up initially and, if contact cannot be made, a DSL will be informed.

The DSL will attempt to contact the parents. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL deems it necessary, the DSL will undertake a home visit or ask an appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure staff or the family are not put at risk.

10.8 Reporting Concerns about Children or Staff

The importance of **all** staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our safeguarding procedures and advise either DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending School.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the part or whole site closure measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending our School are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Whistleblowing Policy.

10.9 Staff Training and Induction During Part or Whole Site Closures

In line with government guidance, our trained DSLs will be classed as trained even if they cannot receive face to face training. Every effort will be made to attend online training.

All current School staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the School site, then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any caused for concern
- there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual
- the individual remains suitable to work with children.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 10 - Safeguarding Guidance in the Event of Part or Whole Site Closures:

10.10 Safer Recruitment/Volunteers and Movement of Staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our School site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our Single Central Register (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

10.11 Child-on-child abuse

We recognise that abuse can still occur during a School closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the School site during these measures.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of child-on-child abuse and will follow the process set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

10.12 Online Safety

It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguard and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to either DSL.

Video calls to children will be recorded.

10.13 New Children at the School during Part or Whole-Site Closure

Children may join our School from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and safeguarding information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our School Senior Leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

PART 10 - Safeguarding Guidance in the Event of Part or Whole Site Closures:

10.14 Supporting Children Not in School

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in School, they will ensure that an individual communication plan is in place to support that child. Details of that plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file for that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.



APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Channel - part of the Prevent strategy. The process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation

DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service

DfE – Department for Education

DSCP – Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership. This was formerly the Durham Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (Durham LSCB). The DSCP provides the safeguarding arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate their safeguarding services, identify and respond to the needs of children in County Durham, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements. The 3 Statutory Safeguarding Partners in Durham are:

- County Durham Clinical Commissioning Groups (North Durham CCG, Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield CCG)
- Durham County Council (Children and Young People’s Service)
- Durham Constabulary

The Safeguarding Partners share responsibility for ensuring effective local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, all three Safeguarding Partners should decide who would take the lead on issues that arise.

DSL – Designated Safeguarding Lead – staff in School with chief responsibility for safeguarding.

DDSL – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – staff with the necessary training to deputise for either DSL.

Early Help – providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child’s life, from foundation years through to teenage years.

EYFS - Early Years Foundation Stage: sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. All schools and Ofsted-registered early years providers must follow the **EYFS**, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes.

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation

HBA – Honour Based Abuse

HeadSpace – specific to Barnard Castle School and formerly known as PSHCEE: Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (curriculum subject in School)

KCSIE 2025 – Keeping Children Safe in Education – Department for Education statutory guidance, updated annually

LADO – Local Authority Designated Officer, responsible for coordinating the response to concerns that an adult who works with children may have caused them or could cause them harm.

LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Transsexual, Transgender, Questioning, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, other communities, including Allies

Ofsted - Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills, which inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 1 – GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

Prevent duty - The [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) contains a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the Prevent duty.

PSHE – Personal, Social, Health, Education (curriculum subject in School)

RSHE - Relationships, Sex and Health Education (embedded within the School’s PSHE curriculum; statutory from September 2020)

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability

SMT – the School’s Senior Management Team

Social Care Direct – teams working within the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board

TRA – Teaching Regulation Agency, within the Department for Education (formerly the National College for Teaching and Leadership)

UKCCIS – UK Council for Child Internet Safety

VSH -Virtual School Head



APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All School staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

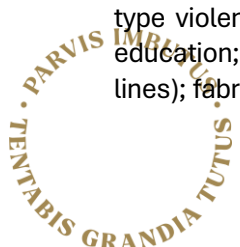
Physical Abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a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

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

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, 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.

Specific Safeguarding Issues: behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger. Safeguarding issues can also manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse, such as bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting, initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Safeguarding issues can also be linked to, for example, children missing education; child sexual exploitation; domestic violence; serious violence (including that linked to county lines); fabricated or induced illness; faith abuse; female genital mutilation; forced marriage; gangs and



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

youth violence; gender-based violence / violence against women and girls; hate; mental health; radicalisation; misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories; relationship abuse; sexting; and trafficking.

Contextual Safeguarding: Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside the School. **All** staff, but especially the designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child’s life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Local authority children’s social care assessments should consider such factors, so the School will provide as much information as possible as part of any referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Mental Health: Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they should take immediate action by speaking to a DSL/DDSL, who will then take the lead on contact with appropriate services and/or local safeguarding partnerships.

The following websites offer further advice on mental health issues:

- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools
- Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying,
- Rise Above Public Health England resources for secondary school teachers.

Domestic abuse: The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Children can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Operation Encompass: Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation (CCE/CSE): Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in learn to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): 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 (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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). It can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence.

The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

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

So-called 'Honour Based' Abuse encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)], forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

County Lines: County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, child referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

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

Serious Violence: All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Advice for schools is provided in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-toschools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence> and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-andvulnerable-adults-county-lines>

So-Called ‘Honour-Based Abuse: So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the DSL/DDSL. As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and local authority children’s social care.

FGM: FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can also be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM. To give an example of indications that a girl has already been subjected to FGM:

- A child may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A child may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems or spend longer than normal in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school and/or noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the child’s return.
- A child is reluctant to undergo medical examination.

If staff have a concern that a child may be at risk of FGM, they should speak to the DSL immediately.

There is a specific legal duty on teachers to report to the Police if they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

Anyone can report concerns about FGM to Durham police on the direct number

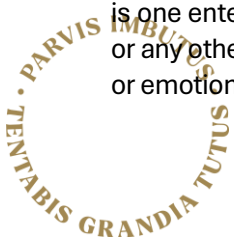
101.

The national helpline is: 0800 028 3550 and fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

In addition there are a local support groups to help victims:

- Shine 0191 277 2048 and shine@newcastle.gov.uk
- Angelou Centre 0191 226 0394 and admin@angelou-centre.org.uk
- FGM awareness training is available to **all** staff – see DSLs for details.

Forced Marriage: Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, details of which can be found on pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage.

In addition, 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. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

School staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: **020 7008 0151** or email fmu@fco.gov.uk.

Radicalisation: Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools’ safeguarding approach.

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

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

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised.

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 DSL/DDSL making a Prevent referral.

The school’s DSLs/DDSL are aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

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

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism: Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Cybercrime: Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or ‘cyber dependent’ (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal ‘hacking’), for example accessing a school’s computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or ‘booting’. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, ‘NPCC- When to call the Police’ and National Cyber Security Centre – WWW.NCSC.GOV.UK

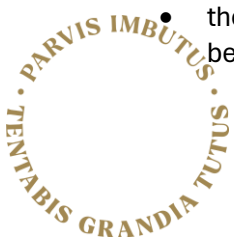
Homelessness: Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children’s social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

In most cases School staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children’s social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities: Children with SEND may not outwardly shown signs of abuse and/or may have difficulties in communication about abuse or neglect.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child’s disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and



Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025, Issue 1.0

APPENDIX 2 – INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff will support such children in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing this with the DSL as appropriate.



APPENDIX 3 – ACTIONS WHERE THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

