Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines 2022-23

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy is effective for all academies within The Mead Educational Trust, the Teaching School, the SCITT and all other activities under the control of the Trust and reporting to the Trust Board.

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Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
1.0	25.02.2016	Ali Rutherford/ Jo Freer	Updated to reflect conversion to academy status.
2.0	15.03.2016	CJO	Removed Whistleblowing Policy from appendices.
3.0	15.06.2016	ARU	Annual update of policy Insertion of NSPCC telephone number. Addition of 'Peer to Peer Abuse' text. Additional detail regarding additional barriers that exist when recognising the abuse of pupils with SEND.
4.0	04.10.2016	ARU	Addition of 'Sexting' or youth produced sexual imagery guidance.
5.0	13.10.2016	M Collins	Aligned with most recent updates from LA, including Early Help, Channel and Prevent.
6.0	September 2017	A Rutherford and M Collins	Addition of information relating to sexting, domestic violence (teen relationships), honour-based violence, abuse linked to faith, bullying and safeguarding and private fostering.
7.0	September 2018	M Collins	Additional information added in line with KCSIE 3rd September 2018
8.0	September 2019	M Collins	Additional information added in line with KCSIE 2nd September 2019
9.0	March 2020	M Oldman	Additional Appendix added to address the COVID 19 pandemic and revised guidance from the government.
10.0	September 2020	M Collins	Additional information added in line with KCSIE 1st September 2020
11.0	October 2020	M Collins	Additional Appendix added to address heightened risk of radicalisation during COVID 19 pandemic.
12.0	January 2021	M Oldman A Curran	Updated Appendix 6 to address new National Lockdown in place from 4th January 2021 Amendments made following EU exit – update KCSIE January 2021
13.0	September 2021	M Collins	Additional information added in line with KCSIE 1st September 2021 Removed appendix 6 relating to national lockdown procedures and replaced with appendix 6- Guidance on child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and enhanced appendix 3 to include low level concerns
14.0	September 2022	A Curran	Additional information added in line with KCSIE 1st September 2022 Appendix 6 rewritten based on the Sexual Harassment Between Young People example policy created by the LA (Lesley Booth, Service Manager) Appendix 3 rewritten based on the Low-Level Concern policy created by the LA (Mohammed Patel and Julie Chapaneri)

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines 2022-2023

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of physical or mental health and/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 life chances.

All staff receive a copy of the Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022, Part One at induction.

All Designated Safeguarding Leads[i] within the school have full knowledge of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022.

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Contact Numbers

Principal	Rita Hindocha 0116 4827195
Chair of Academy Council	Suzanne Overton-Edwards
Academy Cllr with Safeguarding Responsibility	Suzanne Overton-Edwards
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Danielle Aylmer-Teago (Lead Behaviour & Safeguarding Officer) 0116 4827195
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Laura Samuel (Assistant Head of Year 8) Blexley Palmer (Assistant Head of Year 7)
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Grace Sharpe
Designated Teacher for SEND	Grace Sharpe (SENDCO)
Designated Teacher for Mental Health	Danielle Aylmer-Teago
Attendance Lead	Danielle Aylmer-Teago

Leicestershire Police	999 / 0116 2222222
One Front Door Duty & Advice (Includes out of hours) das.team@leicester.gov.uk Early Help & Support/early-help@leicester.gov.uk	0116 454 1004
Children's Safeguarding Unit	0116 454 2440
Safeguarding in Education Julie Chapaneri & Mohammed Patel Safeguardingineducation@leicester.gov.uk	0116 454 2440
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Jude Atkinson	0116 454 2440
Leicester Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board (LSCB) http://www.lcitylscb.org/	0116 454 6520
Prevent (Advice / Referral) City: Ailsa Coull – Ailsa.coull@leicester.gov.uk	0116 4546923 07519 069833
UAVA – United against violence and abuse (Domestic Violence, Abuse between Teenagers and Domestic Violence in BME community) info@uava.org.uk	0808 80 200 28
Forced Marriage Unit fmu@fco.gov.uk	020 7008 0151
Female Genital Mutilation Helpline fgmhelp@nscpcc.org	0800 028 3550
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line help@nspcc.org.uk	0800 0280285

Useful Websites and links:
www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.disrespectnobody.co.uk
www.saferinternet.org.uk
www.internetmatters.org www.pshe-association.org.uk
www.educateagainsthate.com
www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation
Children Forced Into Opening Criminal Bank Accounts | The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)

1. Introduction

1.1. The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests of the child and young person.** We endeavour to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare, take into consideration the child's lived experience and prevent concerns from escalating.

The aim of this policy is to safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety and health by fostering an honest, open, caring and supportive climate and our staff members working with pupils maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. This policy sets out how the school and the academy council discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

1.2. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. TMET and its academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its students. We believe that:

- All children/young people have the right to be protected from harm;
- Children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in school;
- Children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse;
- All children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs;
- All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other;
- All children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs – a happy healthy sociable child/young person will achieve better educationally;

- Academies can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours; and
- All staff and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children and protecting them from abuse.

1.3. TMET and its academies will fulfil local and national responsibilities and accepted best practice as laid out in the following documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Revised Dec 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education**:** Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE Sept 2022)
- What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused March 2015
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE Sept 2021)
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 & Amended Regulations 2015; Safer Recruitment in Education including
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice 2019 (Rev April 2022) Safer Recruitment consortium
- Prevent Duty 2015
- Information sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people parents and carers**.** (March 2015)
- Leicester Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board (LSCPB)
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002 s175/s157
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice (DfE 2018)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 2000
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Position of Trust offence)
- Voyeurism (Offences Act) 2019
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Female Genital mutilation Act 2003/Updated regulations July 2020
- Safeguarding & Child Protection education procedures in Leicester, notes, information, and training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in schools
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Safeguarding and Vulnerable Group Act 2006
- Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes (December 2020)– UK Council for Internet Safety
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school Revised July 2022

1.4. The Trust takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our academies to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

1.5. We recognise that all staff and academy councillors have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern.

1.6. All staff believe that our academies should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

2. Overall aims

To contribute to safeguarding our pupils and promoting their welfare by:

- Supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and resilience;
- Providing an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties;
- Raising the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse;
- Providing a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children including Children Missing from Education;
- Acknowledging the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding pupils;
- Developing a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse;
- Developing effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children including Early Help and intervention;
- Developing effective working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding children. Including appropriate work within the curriculum;
- Ensuring that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of our facilities.

3. Key Processes

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Our school procedures for safeguarding children are in line with the Leicester City Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board (LSCPB), Multi Agency Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures (https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com) in addition to the statutory requirements as outlined in 1.3.

4. Expectations

4.1. All staff and visitors will be familiar with this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy

- Staff will have access to, a copy of and be well versed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; which will also form part of their induction and revisited every year, as a minimum, through Whole School Safeguarding Training.
- Be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and checks, whether they are new staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers etc.
- For those regular external visitors/providers such as cleaners and caterers - to have shown the school a copy of their H & S and Child Protection Guidelines as best practice and where applicable; and that the school has a statement in main reception notifying external visitors who the school's DSL is and what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Be alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse (See Appendix 1)
- Staff understand that 'harm' can include 'witnessing harm to others,' for example, cases of domestic abuse
- Deal with a disclosure of abuse from a child in line with our school procedures; informing the DSL immediately and provide a written account as soon as possible. This includes making the appropriate contact with children's social care.

4.2. All parents will be familiar with this safeguarding policy

- Parents/Carers will have access to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as part of the initial information given to prospective/existing Parents/Carers and will be available through our school's website. Additional copies will be issued as and when required, and parents will be notified of changes within the document e.g., the revised annual policy.

4.3. Communicating with parents

In addition to section 4.2 above, the following statement is provided and highlighted to parents, so they are aware of the school's responsibilities:

"The school ensures children learn in a safe, caring and enriching environment. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe, to develop positive and healthy relationships, how to avoid situations where they might be at risk including by being exploited.

***The school has a statutory responsibility** to share any concerns it might have about a child in need of protection with other agencies and in particular police, health and children's services. Schools are not able to investigate concerns but have a legal duty to refer them. In most instances, the school will be able to inform the parents/carer of its need to make a referral. However, sometimes the school is advised by Children's Social Care or police that the parent/carer cannot be informed whilst they investigate the matter. We understand the anxiety parents/carers understandably feel when they are not told about any concerns from the outset. The school follows legislation that aims to act in the interests of the child"*

5. Extended school and before and after school activities

5.1. Where a school within the Trust has services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply.

5.2. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Academy Council of that school should seek assurance in writing, and then ensure that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

5.3. Failure to comply with the school's safeguarding policy would result in termination of agreement.

6. Procedures

6.1. Each School within The Mead Educational Trust will ensure that:

- The Academy Council understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection and safeguarding, who have undertaken approved DSL training, which will be refreshed every two years.

- All members of staff receive INSET training at least annually on the latest version of KCSIE in order to develop their understanding of child protection and safeguarding, in particular the signs and indicators of abuse.

- All members of staff, volunteers, and academy councillors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.

- All parents/carers are made aware of the school's responsibilities regarding child protection procedures through publication of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on the school website and in other communications with home.

- Its lettings policy (if applicable) will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time.

- Community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.

- Our school is committed to safer recruitment as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. The school will ensure all appropriate checks are carried out for all staff and volunteers and will consider including online searches as part of due diligence. Appropriate checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record which will be audited annually by a Trust appointed independent educational consultant, and then termly by Rita Hindocha. The school will ensure at least one person who is safer recruitment trained will be part of the recruitment process. (See Part Three of KCSIE 2022.)

- All academy councillors and trustees will undergo a DBS check and a S128 check as outlined in paragraph 165 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

- The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to either the Disclosure and Barring Service or the relevant Government Department/Agency (where appropriate), depending on the nature of the concern, with the advice and support of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

- A member of our SLT has attended LADO training (Managing allegations against staff members). Our school understands the harms threshold/ and procedure for managing allegations and low-level concerns as set out in KCSIE 2022 (see appendix 3 of this policy).

- Our procedures will be reviewed and updated at least annually.

- The name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) will be clearly shown in the school with procedures for reporting concerns

- All adults, (including supply teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers), new to the Trust will be given or directed to a copy of: the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff Code of Conduct, the booklet 'What To Do if You're Worried A Child is Being Abused' (Stat guidance template (publishing.service.gov.uk), Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 Part 1 and Annex C and the name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and these will be explained as part

of their induction into the school. In addition to this, all such staff and volunteers will be made aware of the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice DfE 2020 for Adults who work with Children and Young People' booklet and the document 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, 2022 (Safer Recruitment Consortium Home (saferrecruitmentconsortium.org)

7. Responsibilities

7.1. All our staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This will not prevent our staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL(s) if they have concerns about a child. Our staff will also determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

We understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns as soon as a staff member or volunteer suspects/knows of a concern that we may have about children. The first point of contact is the school's DSL or other members of the Safeguarding Team (in their absence). The DSL will inform the Principal of any referrals to be made. If any staff member is involved the report is made to the Principal. If the Principal is involved, then the Chair of the Academy Council should be informed.

7.2. If a staff member feels they cannot disclose information to their DSL, Principal or academy councillor(s), they must then follow the whistleblowing procedures to report their concerns. See TMET Whistleblowing Policy for further clarification.

7.3. All staff will be versed in our Whistleblowing procedure, understand when it is appropriate to use the procedures and will be given details of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline.

7.4. All staff will be well versed in the school's Child Missing and Attendance procedures and know and understand that any child that is regularly absent or missing can be a cause for concern and a possible indicator that the child is at risk of abuse or in need of help and support.

8. Leadership of Safeguarding – Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. Designated Safeguarding Lead – Role and Responsibilities

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022, Annex C, outlines specific responsibilities of the DSL (a member of the school's Leadership Team) and their responsibilities within this role. Our lead DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). We also have a number of deputy designated leads who are trained to the same standard and can provide the same level of support. Their key areas of responsibilities include:

Managing referrals:

- Cases of suspected abuse and neglect are referred to children's social care/police

- Staff who make referrals to the local authority are supported
- The Channel programme is used where there is a radicalisation concern, and staff are supported with this
- Cases in relation to allegations against staff members are referred to the LADO, including disclosure and barring
- Cases where any crime may have been committed are reported to the Police

Working with Others:

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- Liaise with the Principal to inform them of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult
- As required, liaise with the 'case manager' (as per KCSIE part four) and the Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and SENDCOs) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety), and when deciding whether to make a referral, by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.
- Work with the Principal and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
    - Ensuring that the school knows who its cohort of children who have (or have had) a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
    - Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Undertaking Training:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, and social care referral arrangements
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference/review conference and attend to these effectively
- Understand the importance that the DSL(s) has/have in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- Understand and support the school or college staff with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college

- Recognise additional risks that children with (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, our DSL(s) knowledge and skills are refreshed at regular intervals to allow them to understand and keep up to date with any developments relevant to their role.

Raising Awareness:

- Ensure the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is known, understood and used appropriately by all staff members
- Ensure the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is reviewed annually and is available publicly; and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made
- Link with the local safeguarding partners to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Information sharing and managing child protection files:

Our DSL(s) are responsible for ensuring that our child protection files are kept up to date. The information is kept confidential and stored securely. Our records will contain the following information:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Transfer child protection files (including in year transfers) to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt will be obtained

Our DSL(s) will ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or its contents are shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice outlined government guidance KCSIE 2022.

Understanding the views of children:

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, our DSL(s) will be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them
- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication

Holding and sharing Information:

Our DSL(s) will be equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR).
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

Availability:
During term time school hours, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will always be available on school site. The school will arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities and trips, and in exceptional circumstances, availability will be made via phone and or Teams.

8.2. The Principal – Role and Responsibilities

Each School's Principal will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the TMET Trust Board are fully implemented and followed by all staff by ensuring that:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and other relevant Policies are updated annually, ratified by the TMET Trust Board and are available publicly via the school website.
- All staff undergo and attend annual whole school safeguarding training (INSET).
- All staff undergo appropriate online safety training.
- All staff receive regular updates in relation to safeguarding, child protection and online safety.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable DSLs and other staff to discharge their responsibilities; including taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children.
- The Principal is aware of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) processes regarding allegations about other staff members, specifically the 'harms' and 'low-level concerns' thresholds.
- The Principal has attended LADO Training and refreshed no later than every 2 years.
- The Principal has attended Safer Recruitment Training and that training is refreshed no later than every 5 years; and that at least 1 member of the Academy Council has attended Safer Recruitment Training.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children and processes, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner (whole school approach, child centred practice and culture of vigilance).
- All staff are made aware that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns, promptly and using the proper channels.
- All staff understand Early Help and have the ability to identify children who would benefit from Early Help intervention.
- Regular external visitors/providers such as cleaners, caterers have shown the school a copy of their H & S and Child Protection guidelines as best practice where applicable; and that the school has a statement in main reception notifying external visitors who the schools' DSL(s) are and what to do if they have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- The DSLs undergo safeguarding and child protection training, which is updated regularly, with advice from the LSCPB, Safeguarding in Education and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, Annex C.
- New members of staff, temporary or permanent (including volunteers) are given a full induction that includes Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines and names of the DSL(s).
- All staff are made aware of their right to whistleblow, have access to the whistleblowing procedures and are well

versed with them.

8.3 The Trust Board and Academy Council – Roles and Responsibilities

Our Lead Academy Councillor for Safeguarding is Suzanne Overton-Edwards.

The Mead Educational Trust board has a strategic leadership responsibility for our school's safeguarding arrangements and comply with their duties under legislation. Our Academy Council and Trust board ensures policies, procedures and training in each TMET school are effective and comply with the law at all times. The Safeguarding trustee champions issues to do with safeguarding and child protection across the Trust and provides information and reports to the Trust Board (or one of its committees). *Please note that the TMET scheme of delegation provides further detail regarding responsibilities of the Trust Board and each Academy Council*.

The Trust will ensure that all our Academy Councillors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. The training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in our school / colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Our governors and trustee's training will be regularly updated.

The Trust Board and our school's Academy Council will ensure that:

- Our school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place, and the policy is made available to parents via the school website (paper copies available on request).
- All staff members working with children consider the best interests of children and are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- There are clear and easily understood systems for children to confidently report abuse, and they know that their concerns will be taken seriously.
- There is a senior member of the school's leadership team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection – Lead DSL.
- There is at least one appointed deputy for child protection, in the event of the unavailability of the DSL.
- The DSL and the appointed deputy(s) for child protection undertake the necessary training for designated senior persons, including a DSL refresher every two years.
- The Principal, and all other staff and volunteers who work with children, undertake appropriate training which is kept up to date through Whole School Training (minimum every 2 years); and that new staff, temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities (through the induction process).
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse relating to members of staff and volunteers (LADO) and that the thresholds for allegations against staff and volunteers are understood and reported by all staff members.
- The Code of Conduct is up to date, maintained and adhered to by staff so as not to bring the school into disrepute.
- The Chair of the Academy Council (or, in the absence of a chair, the vice chair) deals with any allegations of abuse made against the Principal, in liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (see Appendix 3).
- At least 1 member of the Academy Council has attended Safer Recruitment Training as a minimum and this is refreshed regularly.
- Councillors will not have a role in dealing with individual cases nor have a right to details of cases except when exercising their disciplinary functions relating to allegations against a member of staff.
- Any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to the attention of the Academy Council are rectified.
- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually, and information is provided to the Local Authority on how the Academy Council discharges its duties regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- A Safeguarding Councillor is appointed. This is an individual member of the Academy Council who will

champion issues to do with safeguarding children and child protection within the school, liaise with the DSL, and provide information and reports to the Academy Council, and that person is appropriately trained to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

- The school creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children (Part three: Safer Recruitment, Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022).
- The chair of the Academy Council or the Safeguarding Councillor works with the school to complete the annual Local Authority Safeguarding Governors' Report and return the document to the Local Authority.
- There is a Lead Academy Councillor for Antibullying and behaviour in the school. Our lead is Shabina Ladha.
- There is a Lead Governor for Mental Health in the School. Our lead is Sarah Eaton.

9.Supporting Children

Some children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help for various reasons and their experiences of trauma and abuse can lead them to becoming more vulnerable or educationally disadvantaged. When receiving information from the Local Authority that a child has a social worker, our DSL(s) will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interest of a child's safety and welfare. Our DSL(s), where appropriate, will share information accordingly with relevant partner agencies to safeguard and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of any child. In addition to this:

- We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

- We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal, too aggressive or being withdrawn.

- We recognise the need to identify children in need of extra mental health support and to provide, resource or refer children to access that support.

9.1. Each School within The Mead Educational Trust will support all children by:

- Ensuring that effective systems are in place to ensure that children can confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously and they can safely express their views. These systems will be promoted and easy to understand.

- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of school life including through the curriculum.

- Identifying children who need extra mental health support, which includes working with external agencies.

- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.

- Ensure children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and know how to get help when they need it. Both, physically, mentally, and online.

- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children (including social care and Early Help).

- Notifying Children's Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.

- Ensuring that a named teacher is designated for Looked After Children/Children In Need (LAC & CIN) and that an up-to-date list of LAC/CIN is regularly reviewed and updated.

- Providing continuing support to a student (about whom there have been concerns) who leaves the school by ensuring that such concerns and school medical records are forwarded under confidential cover to the Head at the pupil's new school as a matter of urgency.

- Working with partner agencies to support and safeguard children within; Early Help, Children in Need, Child Protection and Looked After Children.

- Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. This will be a part of a broad and balanced curriculum. We recognise that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with SEND. Aspects include:
  - stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - healthy and respectful relationships
  - boundaries and consent
  - stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - body confidence and self-esteem
  - how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
  - the concepts of, and laws relating to- sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support
  - what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

10. Confidentiality

10.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential and the best interest of a child should be always considered. However, The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Our staff may share information without consent where this is good reason to do so, when the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner. *It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk.*

10.2 The Principal or DSL will disclose personal information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only. Staff will be informedof relevant details only when the DSL feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual student/family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared, with whom, and when.

10.3 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

10.4 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's own safety or well-being, or that of another child.

10.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with their parents/carers consent unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Children's Social Care, Duty & Advice Service.

11. Support Staff

11.1. We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

11.2. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties and concerns with the DSL and to seek further support where necessary. This could be provided by, for example, the Principal, Occupational Health and/or a teacher/trade union representative as appropriate.

11.3. We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022 (www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org) provides advice on this and the circumstances which should be avoided, in order to limit complaints against staff of abuse of trust, and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse. These matters form part of staff induction and are referred to in the staff handbook/code of conduct.

11.4. We recognise that DSLs should have access to support (as in 11.2) and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised or arranged through the Local Authority/ LSCB

12. Allegations Against Staff

12.1. All school staff (including supply staff) should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

12.2. All school staff should be aware of the school Behaviour Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

12.3. All school staff should be aware of the Safer Working Practice guidance (www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org)

12.4. All school staff will sign the Online Safety Acceptable Use Agreement. This sets out responsibilities for all staff, ensuring they have an up-to-date awareness of e-safety matters and that all digital communications with students/parents/carers should be a professional level and only carried out using official school systems.

12.5. We understand that a pupil may make an allegation against a member of staff.

12.6. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Principal (or Vice Principal in their absence)

12.7. The Principal will act immediately, consulting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow the process for managing the concern laid down in the LSCB Procedures https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com and Appendix 3 of this policy. The Principal is aware of the harms thresholds and difference between low level concerns and harms as set out in KCSIE 2022

and within the school's procedure for managing allegations against staff (Appendix 3)

12.8. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Principal, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the chair of the Academy Council who will consult with Children's Social Care, LADO, without notifying the Principal first (0116 454 2440).

12.9. On all occasions identified in 12.7 & 12.8 above, the procedures outlined in Appendix 3 of this policy will be followed.

12.10. Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult (as in 12.8 above) in making this decision.

12.11. In line with this policy and other Trust and school procedures for incident reporting/recording, staff and pupils may provide accounts of events, which will be stored under our own secure systems and may be produced in the event of any allegation. However, such accounts must not constitute an official statement and the reporting person must not be questioned over their disclosure at this stage.

12.12. Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will manage the suspension of adults where necessary from school premises.

12.13. Our School staff are aware of and understand our 'Guidelines for Avoiding Allegations of Abuse' as outlined in Appendix 4.

13. Whistleblowing

13.1. We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

13.2. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they should speak to the Chair of Academy Council or the Local Authority Designated Officer.

13.3. All staff are aware of and understand how to use our whistleblowing procedures found in the Whistleblowing Policy.

13.4. All staff have access to the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline

14. Our Role in the Prevention of Abuse

14.1. We recognise that each school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

14.2 The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos, which is understood by all staff, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk knowing that they will be listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Provide opportunities for students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being.

- Address relevant issues through the PSHE curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationships education, mental/physical health, e-safety and bullying.

- Address other safeguarding issues through other areas of the curriculum, for example, circle time, English, History, Drama, Art and computing (including online and offline safety).

- Link together policies which address issues of power and potential harm to ensure a whole school approach, e.g., bullying, equal opportunities, positive handling and behaviour.

- Ensure that the safeguarding policy is reflected in the whole school ethos, ensuring that pupils are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

15. Safeguarding Children who are Vulnerable to Extremism

15.1. Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy (and Revised Prevent Duty Guidance 2015 Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk), there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

15.2. Each School within The Mead Educational Trust values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

15.3. The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. The Mead Educational Trust is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern. Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in Appendix 5.

15.4 Each School within The Mead Educational Trust seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to religious ideologies, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist extremist and Animal Rights movements.

LOCAL CONTEXT: *Local risks as defined in the Counter Terrorism Local Profile briefing 2022*

The Online space is high risk, not just in terms of radicalisation but also around harmful influences

and platforms hosting hate speech/groups/individuals. This has increased significantly since COVID19 with children and young people being exposed to these narratives, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. We are also seeing problems with peer to peer sharing of extreme and harmful content.

The biggest threat is from DAESH and Al Qaeda influenced extremism- this is both Locally and nationally. However, we know that the Extreme right wing and far right have capitalised on the fear and uncertainty of COVID and have used it to their advantage within their propaganda i.e., anti-immigration sentiment, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitic narratives to name a few.

Extremist travel is a priority. The risk around young people travelling out to areas such as Syria and Iraq to engage in conflict is still there (although slightly less now than it was a few years ago) and there should now be a consideration around returnees from Islamic state territories (both adults and children) and how the school would both identify and support them.

Self-Initiated Terrorism (previously referred to as lone actor attacks on home soil) is a priority and the propaganda being used by Daesh/Al Qaeda encourages this now rather than travelling to Islamic state territories to engage in conflict. SIT are difficult to identify because they act alone and often self-radicalise online.

Mixed/Unclear and unstable ideologies are an emerging and increasing risk and should be given the same consideration for support by Prevent as other more clear and consistent ideologies. Young people/children referred to Prevent with these ideologies often present with multiple and complex needs and there is a commonality in cases with an obsession with mass violence (school shooter interests, weapons, mass violence but without targeting a specific group in society) – the majority of local Prevent referrals are for extreme right wing and Mixed/Unclear/Unstable ideologies.

The extreme right wing is a high priority. Activity is predominantly conducted online and can be covert in nature. We are seeing crossover between the ERW space and CVID conspiracy theories/Incel culture/Anti vax narratives. Right wing groups such as Patriotic Alternative have made a concerted effort throughout the pandemic to engage young people and their parents. PA also have a local footprint in Leicester/Leicestershire

15.5 Risk reduction

15.5.1 The academy councillors, the Principal and the DSLs assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's RE curriculum, SEND policy, assembly approach, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEND, anti-bullying policy and other

issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

15.5.2 When any member of staff has concerns that a student may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL in the first instance

15.5.3 Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason, the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

15.5.4 Our staff have undergone Prevent Awareness Training and understand the steps to follow, via discussions with the DSL, if a referral to the Channel Programme is required

16. Contextual Safeguarding, Assessment of Risk Outside the Home, Extra Familial Harms (Child Criminal Exploitation - CCE)

16.1. CCE is a form of abuse and occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. Safeguarding incidents and CCE can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments.

16.2. The staff from each School within The Mead Educational Trust, particularly our DSL and deputies, will take into account whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

16.3. This is known as contextual safeguarding and assessment of risk outside the home, which simply means that staff from our school will take into account wider environmental factors that may be present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and welfare. This way, schools are able to provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process to Children's social care as necessary. Environmental factors within contextual safeguarding include, but are no exclusive to**:**

17. County Lines & Child Financial Abuse

17.1. Criminal exploitation of children is a widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. County Lines is a term used when drug gangs from big cities expand their operations to smaller towns, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting children and vulnerable people to sell drugs.

17.2. Common feature in county lines drug supply is the exploitation of young and vulnerable people. The dealers will frequently target children and adults - often with mental health or addiction problems - to act as drug runners or move cash so they can stay under the radar of law enforcement.

17.3. People exploited in this way will quite often be exposed to physical, mental and sexual abuse, and in some instances will be trafficked to areas a long way from home as part of the network's drug dealing business.

17.4. An increasing number of children and young people are finding themselves the victims of financial fraud /

exploitation, e.g., being groomed online to open bank accounts and launder money. This is known as Child Financial Abuse (CFB). Criminals befriend young people through social media and online games. They offer them gifts, promise money, gaming credits, skins or cryptocurrency. Once they've gained a young person's trust, they force them to carry out fraudulent activities, like opening a bank account for them. This is financial exploitation.

18. Serious Violence, Gang Violence & Youth Crime

18.1. A gang is group of individuals that spends time in public and engages in criminal activity and violence. The group may also be territorial or in conflict with other gangs. Young people involved in gangs have an increased risk of experiencing violence and other types of abuse including sexual exploitation. Gang crime and serious youth violence is also often synonymous with knife crime and other serious violence.

18.2. Most young people and education establishments will not be affected by serious violence or gangs. However, where these problems do occur there will almost certainly be a significant impact.

18.3. Gangs specifically target children who have been excluded from school to groom them as drug dealers in towns across the UK. Exclusion from school appears to be a highly significant trigger point for the escalation of County Lines involvement for children who might be on the fringes of such activity or who are easily manipulated.

19. Knife Crime

19.1. Knife crime has been receiving countrywide attention after being recognised as a contemporary national threat in the UK. There have been several high-profile incidents where teenagers have been killed or injured by someone using a knife as a weapon. Knife crime simply put is any crime that involves a knife. This includes:

- carrying a knife or trying to buy one if you're under 18
- threatening someone with a knife
- carrying a knife that is banned
- a murder where the victim was stabbed with a knife
- a robbery or burglary where the thieves carried a knife as a weapon
- Within Leicester, May 2019 saw 237 reported incidents involving a knife or bladed instrument which was an increase of 30 from the previous month

20. Child Criminal Exploitation and Cybercrime Involvement

20.1. Organised criminal groups or individuals exploit children and young people due to their computer skills and ability, in order to access networks/data for criminal and financial gain. There are a number of signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim or is vulnerable to being exploited which include:

- Missing from education
- Show signs of other types of abuse/aggression towards others
- Have low self-esteem, and feelings of isolation, street or fear
- Lack trust in adults and appear fearful of authorities
- Have poor concentration or excessively tired
- Become anti-social
- Display symptoms of substance dependence
- Excessive time online computer/gaming forums
- Social Isolation in school with peers

- High functioning with an interest in computing

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

County Lines criminal exploitation is also synonymous with Child Sexual Exploitation. Criminal activity and Gang Association can lead into CSE through situations such as initiation, peer pressure in addition to sexual favours. Although county lines is mainly criminal, all our staff are aware of the definitions of CSE, signs and impact on vulnerable children. This is further outlined in section 17.1 of this Policy.

22. Modern Slavery & Trafficking

22.1. Slavery is an umbrella term for activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in compelled service. The number of British children identified as potential victims of modern slavery has more than doubled in a year, prompting fresh concerns about child exploitation by county lines drugs gangs.

Someone is in slavery if they are:

- forced to work through mental or physical threat
- owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse
- dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'
- physically constrained or have restrictions placed on his/her freedom
- 'slavery' is where ownership is exercised over a person
- 'servitude' involves the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion
- 'forced or compulsory labour' involves work or service extracted from any person under the menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily
- 'human trafficking' concerns arranging or facilitating the travel of another with a view to exploiting them.

22.2. Human trafficking

This relates to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion; of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability; or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person (where a child is involved, the above means are irrelevant). For the purposes of exploitation, this includes (but is not exhaustive):

- Prostitution
- Other sexual exploitation
- Forced labour
- Slavery (or similar)
- Servitude etc.
- Removal of organs

23. Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment (previously Peer on Peer abuse)

Brook Mead Academy recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Abuse to children by their peers will not tolerated or passed off as part of "banter" or "growing up". Our school adopts a zero tolerance to sexual violence, harassment and harm between children and young people.

We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of abuse within our school and beyond. We understand the importance of identifying, recording and responding to **all** safeguarding concerns, regardless of their perceived severity. We understand that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can 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 face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable, while a concern may be low-level, that concern can escalate over time to become much more serious.

Our school takes a whole school approach (on all safeguarding matters), at the same time meeting individual needs and prides itself on creating a safe environment for all pupils. We are committed to following statutory guidance Keeping Children safe in Education 2022 on how schools should respond to all reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school premises, and or online.

PLEASE SEE KCSIE 2022 PART 5 & APPENDIX 6 OF THIS POLICY FOR FULL DETAILS

24. Children and the court system

24.1. Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5- 11-year-olds and 12-17 year olds. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds and https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds

24.2. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/ with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers. If a child or young person from our school is in a situation where they are required to give evidence, staff members will support the child and family members where appropriate.

25. Children with family members in prison

25.1. The imprisonment of a household member is one of ten adverse childhood experiences known to have a significant negative impact on children's long-term health and wellbeing, their attainment, and later life experiences. Children may have to take on extra responsibilities at home, including becoming young carers in some situations.

25.2. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including stigma, isolation and poor mental health. Parental imprisonment is also associated specifically with negative school experiences, such as truanting, bullying and failure to achieve in education and children of prisoners are at a higher risk of mental ill health and have an increased likelihood of experiencing poverty compared to their peers.

25.3. Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year and, as such, our staff will support children and their family members if children from our school have family members in prison. In such cases, staff will remain non-judgemental and supportive towards the child and family so that they can achieve the best whilst in our environment. Furthermore, if a parent of carer finds themselves in this situation, we encourage them to speak with our DSL so that support can be given as necessary.

26. Homelessness

26.1. Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Our DSLs are aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity if our children and family are experiencing homelessness. 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.

26.2. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

26.3. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

26.4. Furthermore, all schools promote Early Help and Support so that children and families can be identified and supported at an early stage. If a parent or carer and/or their children find themselves in this situation, we strongly urge them to speak to our DSL or member of school staff so that support can be provided.

27. Other forms of Abuse and Neglect:

27.1. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Trafficking

CSE is a form of abuse and occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from seemingly consensual relationships to serious gang and group exploitation.

Our staff are aware that sexual exploitation can take many forms and that pupils may not exhibit external signs of abuse. Our staff are also aware that it is an offence carrying a maximum sentence of two years imprisonment where an adult (any adult) intentionally communicates (for example, by e-mail, text message, written note or orally) with a child under 16 (whom the adult does not reasonably believe to be aged 16 or over) for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification. This act forms part of Section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 (offence of Sexual Communication with a Child) and came into force on 3 April 2017.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604931/circular-commencement-s67-serious-crime-act-2015.pdf

Therefore, our staff are vigilant for the less obvious signs, such as lots of new electronic equipment, when before there was none, seeming to have extra money to spend, moving away from established friendship groups, and the use of language appropriate/inappropriate for the child's age. Our staff are also aware of some of the signs and symptoms of CSE through LSCB Leaflets (https://www.lcitylscb.org/safeguarding-leaflets/), staff induction and as part of annual Whole School Safeguarding Training.

Our staff follow guidance and procedures as outlined in 'Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland' available on the LSCB website (Safeguarding Children and Young People from Child Sexual Exploitation (proceduresonline.com). CSE disclosures will be reported immediately to the DSL or directly to Duty&Advice.

Child sexual exploitation can occur in different ways and in different situations. Many young people are 'groomed' by their abuser, online or face-to-face. Grooming is an action deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, to lower the child's inhibitions with the intention of sexually abusing them.

Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust though a range of mediums including social media platforms. Section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 (offence of Sexual Communication with a Child) which came into force on 3 April 2017 also applies to Sexting and Grooming and our staff are fully aware of the legislation (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/circular-201701-sexual-communication-with-a-child-implementation-of-s67-of-the-serious-crime-act-2015).

Grooming Models include**:**

- The relationship / peer model
- Organised / network model & trafficking model
- Inappropriate relationship model
- Gangs model
- Online Gaming / Social Networks

27.2. Sharing Nudes or Semi Nudes/Sexting

This is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video or use of live stream. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. This can be via Peer on Peer or other adults. It is illegal to possess, take or distribute sexual images of someone who is under 18, even if the young person under the age of 18 has taken the image themselves and passed it on themselves.

Our school takes a zero-tolerance approach if children are found to be sending sexual images of themselves or others whether intentionally or maliciously in our school. Our school has a duty of care to inform the Police and Children's Social Care if such a case occurs. We will also notify parents directly if their children are involved. In addition to supporting our children with being safe in a digital world and highlighting the dangers, we refer to the guidance on 'Sharing Nudes and Semi Nudes' from the UK Council for Internet Safety (Dec 2020) and understand how to handle such incidents if they arise in our school:
https://ineqe.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/UKCIS_sharing_nudes_and_semi_nudes_advice_for_education_settings_V2.pdf

Our school staff follow school procedures in reporting such concerns and promote E-Safety and dangers of Sharing Nudes, Sexting, Grooming and CSE through lessons, PSHE and assemblies. Our pupils are taught how to keep safe on and offline and E-Safety is promoted throughout the school and home environment. Where appropriate, our school has also discussed local and national cases where grooming of young children has taken place, such as the Kayleigh Haywood Story/Brecks Game to highlight the dangers.

Our e-safety policy is highlighted to staff, pupils and parents and is available on our school's website including our acceptable usage policy and our staff have undergone relevant online safety at induction and regularly throughout the year.

28. Up skirting

28.1. Upskirting is the act of taking a photograph of underneath a person's skirt without their consent. It's often performed in a public place; public transport or on an escalator, with crowds of people making it harder to spot people taking these photos. It could also happen on the way to and from school and within a school. Being victim to such an incident can cause emotional distress for the young child or young person involved. All staff take these types of incidents seriously and our staff are aware of the law against 'Up skirting' which came into force on April 12, 2019, in England and Wales. If our staff are made aware of such incidents, the schools will follow its safeguarding procedures in addition to seeking advice from the Police. (See also Appendix 6 – sexual violence and harassment.)

29. Domestic Violence and Abuse & Violence between young people (Teen relationships)

29.1. The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

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

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse

29.2. There have been a number of high profiles cases both locally and nationally where domestic violence and abuse has had a significant and direct impact on the child and their wellbeing. If the school is made aware of incidents of domestic violence which are impacting on a child within the school, (suspicions and allegations of abuse, harm and significant risk to a child), the school will follow Local Authority and Leicester Safeguarding Board guidelines in reporting such concerns to Children's Social Care, Duty and Advice or the Police and will also seek further guidance where necessary. The school will also utilise Operation Encompass (https://www.operationencompass.org/) as a conduit between school and the police.

29.3. Domestic abuse is not limited to adults; there is an increasing awareness of violence from one teenager to another:

- 1 in 5 teenage girls have been assaulted by a boyfriend
- Young women are more likely to experience sexual violence then other age groups
- Young women with older partners are at increased risk of victimisation
- Recent surveys (including NSPCC, Zero Tolerance and End Violence Against Women campaign) reveal that approximately 40% of our young people are already being subjected to relationship abuse in their teenage years

  New report shows scale of abuse against teenagers | NSPCCNew report shows scale of abuse against teenagers | NSPCC

29.4. If our school is made aware of children behaving this way with other children within our school, and violence is apparent between the young people's intimate relationship; this includes issues around the use of social media and Sexting, we will view this as a significant child welfare concern and where necessary, the appropriate agencies will be informed. This includes Children's Social Care and the Police.

29.5. If such cases are prevalent within our school, whether the incident involves Adult Relationships or Teen Relationships, the school will also work closely with the child and the Principal/DSL will endeavour to support the child who has been exposed to this type of violence and abuse with the involvement of (where appropriate) their parents/carers and their boyfriend/girlfriend.

29.6. Furthermore, involvement through Operation Encompass and Early Help Offer can also support the child and parents/carers. The school will ensure communications and multiagency working with Social Care and Early Help is maintained to fully support the child and their family (victims). Staff will also work with all the children in our school to ensure information and the importance of healthy relationships is highlighted through assemblies, circle time and PSHE lessons.

30. Child Missing from Education

A Child Missing From Education forms part of the wider LSCB procedures (https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm) for children who go missing from School, Home, Care Education and includes 'Families who go missing.'

A pupil missing from education on several occasions is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect.

Should a pupil go missing from our school, our Attendance Officer will inform the DSL/SLT and contact the Educational Welfare Service. The DSL will consider further actions and/or support should it be required and to ensure they help identify the any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

If a child is no longer coming to our school where the parent/carer has removed them, we will ensure that appropriate steps are taken and measures are in place, e.g. we will follow our school guidelines in monitoring those parents/carers who are home tutoring in line with support from the Educational Welfare Service; follow procedures where a child is taken out of school to go on holiday; and ensure the relevant safeguarding checks are made when a child is removed from school as the family are moving away.

We will notify all relevant partner agencies/services including Education Welfare, correct forms will be completed, information will be recorded, and child folders/information will be passed on to the appropriate person (where applicable).

31. Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

Honour-based Abuse is a term that embraces a variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women) including domestic abuse, which is perpetrated in the name of so called 'honour'. The honour code which it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives and women who do not abide by the 'rules' are then punished for bringing shame on the family. Infringements may include a woman having a boyfriend; rejecting a forced marriage; pregnancy outside of marriage; interfaith relationships; seeking divorce, FGM, Forced marriage, abuse linked to faith and culture, breast ironing, inappropriate dress or make-up and even kissing in a public place.

HBA can exist in any culture or community where males are in position to establish and enforce women's conduct. However, males can also be victims, sometimes as a consequence of a relationship which is deemed to be inappropriate, if they are gay, have a disability or if they have assisted a victim.

32. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

32.1. Female Genital Mutilation is an illegal operation under the Female Mutilation Act 2003, is a form of child abuse and as such, is dealt with under the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Definition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation (July 2020 update)

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons.

32.2. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. Therefore, our staff have been briefed on the importance of FGM through our annual Whole School Safeguarding and are aware of some of the signs and symptoms.

32.3. Responding to FGM - the school will ensure that:

- we raise awareness of staff regarding the issues of FGM through Whole School Training
- staff have a clear understanding of what FGM is
- SRE and Health curriculums supports pupils' understanding of their bodies and keeping themselves safe
- absences are monitored and followed up where concerns are noted

As of October 2015, it became a mandatory responsibility of all staff members to report any suspicion of FGM to the police if the child is under 18 years of age. If any of our staff are aware of such concerns, staff will, in the first instance, report their concerns to the DSL and/or Principal and then take appropriate steps to either directly contact the Police or seek advice from Duty & Advice, Children's Social Care.

Any concerns raised (including any referrals made) will be monitored closely and recorded following our school's procedures by the staff members raising the concern, the DSL or both.

33. Mental Health

33.1. Our staff should also be 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.

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

33.3. 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.

33.4. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken and be reported to a DSL or deputy via the safeguarding@brook-tmet.uk.

33.5. Support in school:

- In house counselling provision, via Early Intervention provider, Relate.
- In house mentoring via our Learning and Behaviour Mentor.
- Mental health and wellbeing covered as part of whole school PSHE curriculum
- Dedicated senior Mental Health Lead.
- Half termly "COZ" sessions – drop-in sessions with Relate available for **all** scholars.
- School nurse promotion and signposting events.
- Mental health display board for scholars including advice and signposting.
- Engagement with local and national mental health initiatives including "Mental Health Week", including assemblies and tutor time activities.

34. Forced Marriage

34.1. A forced marriage is a marriage that is performed under duress and without the full and informed consent or free will of both parties. Duress cannot be justified on religious or cultural grounds. Victims of forced marriage may be the subject of physical violence, rape, abduction, false imprisonment, enslavement,

emotional abuse, and murder. It is important not to confuse ‘forced' marriage with ‘arranged' marriage. In the instance of an ‘arranged' marriage both parties freely consent.

34.2. The Governments definition of a Forced Marriage is:

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriagehttps://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage

34.3. Our staff, through induction and Whole School Training are aware of the importance and impact on a child/student who is involved in such situations.

34.4. In addition, the Forced Marriage Unit have issued guidance on Forced Marriage and vulnerable adults due to an emerging trend of cases where such marriages involving people with learning difficulties. This is not a crime which is perpetrated by men only, sometimes female relatives will support, incite or assist. It is also not unusual for younger relatives to be selected to undertake the abuse to protect senior members of the family. Sometimes contract killers and bounty hunters will also be employed.

34.5. In such cases, disclosures and concerns relating to Forced Marriage/Honour Based Abuse will be reported directly to the DSL and the Police due to the impact it could have on the child/student in the wider community. Information will be sought from Children’s Social Care Duty & Advice and where appropriate and Police and the Forced Marriage Unit.

35. Abuse linked to faith, beliefs and culture

35.1. Child abuse is never acceptable in any community, in any culture, in any religion, under any circumstances. However, some children are subject to certain kinds of child abuse linked to their faith, belief or culture and this includes abuse that might arise through a belief in spirit possession or other spiritual or religious beliefs.

This kind of abuse can also include:

- Belief in concept of witchcraft, magic or voodoo
- Demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray
- The evil eye or djinns and dakini
- Ritual or muti murders
- Breast Ironing
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour based violence and Forced Marriage
- Chastisement of a child in a Place of Worship

Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, our school recognises that sadly, such cases are on the increase within the community and as a school, we take such incidents as seriously as any other kind of abuse perpetrated by an adult on a child.

35.2. If the school has been made aware of such a case, the school will follow LSCPB procedures and where appropriate, report the incident to Children’s Social Care and/or the Police.

35.3. Our staff are aware of some of the signs of this kind of abuse and have attended training to support them further. We also work closely with all our children to promote healthy relationships and British Values. We teach our children mutual respect of other faiths, beliefs and cultures in a positive manner rather than negative. We believe and respect each other in our school and maintain this ethos throughout the teaching

and learning environment.

36. Early Help and Supporting Children and their Families

Early Help and prevention is about how different agencies work together to help children, young people and their families at any point in their lives to prevent or reduce difficulties. This means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. At our school, key staff members and DSLs can identify any children who may benefit from Early Help. Early Help services are also delivered at Brook Mead Academy and can include applications for financial or housing support, mentoring and counselling support for young people, parent/carer afternoon teas and peer to peer support.

37. Bullying and Safeguarding

37.1 **The Law** - Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages
- hate crimes

37.2 Bullying is defined as 'behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'. Repeated bullying usually has a significant emotional component, where the anticipation and fear of being bullied seriously affects the behaviour of the victim.

37.3 It can be inflicted on a child by another child or an adult. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

37.4 Our school has a legal duty to ensure we have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place and that all staff, children and parents/carers are made aware of it. This document can be accessed on our school website and sets out clear procedures in managing such incidents within the school. We also deliver work in school about anti-bullying though assemblies and lessons and our staff are trained in appropriately dealing with such incidents.

37.5 However, at times, bullying such as Child-on-child abuse, sexualised behaviour, serious incidents of harm, homophobic behaviours and cyber-bullying will be taken seriously and as a serious safeguarding concern especially if the child is at risk of significant harm. In such cases, our Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal will assess the situation and seek advice and guidance from Children's Social care or the Police especially in relation to illegal activity.

38. Local Priorities

38.1 Within Leicester City, the Local Authority and LSCB has have their own priorities which reflect the area in which our school is based. Some of these include being aware of Knife Crime, Gang Related

Issues, Radicalisation, County Lines, Criminal Activity, Antisocial Behaviour, FGM and Contextual Safeguarding. (This is not an exhaustive list).

38.2 Local priorities at Brook Mead Academy

PRIORITY	ACTIONS TO ADDRESS
Localised patterns of Anti-Social Behaviour	• Fortnightly meetings with our local police liaison officer. • Regular contact with our local neighbourhood policing teams. • Engagement with the Detached Youth Work team. • Regular scholar voice.
Serious violent crime including knife crime	• Fortnightly meetings with our local police liaison officer. • Regular contact with our local neighbourhood policing teams. • Annual engagement in the Knife Crime Awareness session with Leicestershire Police. • Enhanced training for all staff in relation to serious violent crime in our annual INSET training. • Engagement with the Detached Youth Work team. • Regular scholar voice.
Mental Health	• Weekly access to counselling provision via Relate. • Fortnightly school nurse appointments • Half-termly "Community Chill Out Zones" with Relate. • School nurse events – including awareness sessions at lunchtime. • Mental health information regularly sent out to parents and remains a standing item on termly Safeguarding E-Bulletins. • Engagement in local and national mental health initiatives including World Mental Health Day and Mental Health Awareness week. • Issue-based assemblies on mental health and where to get help. • Anxiety workshops delivered to all year 7.
Domestic Abuse	• DSL has attended Operation Encompass: Information Sharing Platform training (September 2022).

	• Close liaison with policing teams and other agencies to support scholars experiencing Domestic Abuse. • DSL team now have access to Liquid Logic which will enable the school to access additional information from the local authority. • Healthy Relationships covered as part of both year 7 and 8 PSHE curriculum. • Information about Operation Encompass sent to parents with support and advice signposted.

38.3 Our SLT, DSLs and staff are aware of these priorities, and we aim to raise awareness through a whole school approach and staff training to ensure our children and young people are aware of such issues and that we implement the correct policies and procedures to ensure that our children and young people are safe within school and within the community we serve. We work closely with other agencies including the Police, Community Groups and Social care and where appropriate, Parents and Carers will also be a part of this whole school and whole community approach process.

39. Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made without the involvement of the local authority to look after a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, for 28 days or more and can include those living with extended family members. So, this could be a child living with people as stated below:

Private Fostering **includes** a child living with:	Private Fostering **does not include** a child living with:
Godparents	Mother/Father
Great Grandparents	Brothers/Sister
Great Aunts or Uncles	Grandparents
Family Friends	Aunts/Uncles
Stepparents where a couple isn't married or in a civil partnership	Stepparents where a couple is married or in a civil partnership
Cousins	Children and young people who are being looked after by the Authority.
A host family which is caring for a child from overseas while they are in education here	

39.1 It's a legal duty (Children Act 1989) for parents or the private foster carer to notify the local authority of whenever a child is not living with a close relative. This should be done six weeks before the arrangement takes place or immediately if it is unplanned or already happening. This is so the local authority can work with private foster carers to keep children safe and also support anyone who is privately fostering.

39.2 Our staff are aware of what Private Fostering is and staff in our school understand their legal duty under the Children Act 1989 to notify the Local Authority/Children's Social Care,

they are made aware of such cases. Our school understands the apprehension some carers may feel is raising such concerns and the difficulty that some carers may have if faced with this situation. As such, our staff will endeavour to support the cares and the child to ensure the wellbeing of the child is maintained and help and advice is made available.

40. Online safety

40.1 Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

40.2 Our school takes online safety and well-being of staff and children seriously and all our staff are given safeguarding training including online safety at induction. In addition to this, all staff receive child protection, safeguarding and online safety updates via email, briefings and staff meetings at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Our approach to online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and whilst planning the curriculum, teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

40.3 The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying;
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

40.4 Education

The school will do everything that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. As part of this process, the school will teach children how to stay safe online using the government guidance and other resources.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf

40.5 Filtering and monitoring

The Trust's IT support team will ensure we have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place, and regularly review their effectiveness regularly alongside schools.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what “appropriate” filtering and monitoring might look like

Guidance on e-security is available from the National Education Network.

Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of the online safety picture, it is only one part.

The school will consider a whole school approach to online safety. This will include a clear procedure on the use of mobile technology in the school. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G and 4G in particular and the school will carefully consider how this is managed on our premises.

40.6 Staff training

The school will ensure that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

APPENDIX 1 - DEFINITION AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

1. NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, e.g., 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 caregivers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

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

Neglect is a priority for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland LSCB. Neglect has been identified as a feature in national & local Serious Case Reviews (SCR's), local learning reviews and multi-agency audits. Our local LSCB have developed a *Neglect Toolkit* to support practitioners identify neglect earlier in families:
LSCPB | Neglect (lcitylscb.org)

2. PHYSICAL ABUSE

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

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

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;
- Bite marks;
- Round burn marks;
- Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given;
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;
- Bald patches;
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;
- Fabricated or Induced Illnesses
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted;
- Fear of medical help;
- Fear of changing for PE;
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

3. SEXUAL ABUSE

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

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge;
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching;
- Reluctance to go home;
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness;
- Refusal to communicate;
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains;
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia;
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse;
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation;
- Unusual compliance;
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling;
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately;
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group;

- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

4. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives “something” (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child/young person performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child/young person. Sexual Exploitation can also include Grooming and online activity.

The presence of any significant indicator for sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children’s social care. The significant indicators are: (not an exhaustive list)

- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity);
- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults;
- Possessing unexplained amounts of money, expensive clothes or other items;
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities;
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology; and
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast-food outlets.

5. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

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

- The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;
- Over-reaction to mistakes;
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders;
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse;
- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Running away;

- Compulsive stealing;
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

N.B. Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) can indicate maltreatment

6. SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR VIOLENCE

Sexual violence
It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘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.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, 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 (schools and colleges 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;
- 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; and
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

7. RESPONSES FROM PARENTS

The following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed;
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development;
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries;
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries;
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child;
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child;
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse;
- Severe chastisement of a child including withholding food and using food as a form of punishment;
- Parents request removal of the child from home; or
- Violence between adults in the household.

8. SEND CHILDREN (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Our school is an inclusive school and welcomes all pupils including those with SEND. We believe in providing every possible opportunity to enable our pupils to develop their full potential whilst promoting their self-esteem and valuing their individuality.

Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the school. Our dedicated SENCO and teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities.

Key issues for safeguarding children with disabilities include:

- Social isolation
- Reliance on others for personal care
- Impaired capacity to resist or report abusive behaviour
- Reduced access to someone to tell
- Especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation
- More frequently away from home, e.g., in hospital, respite care or residential living

Our SENCO and teachers have attended appropriate training as part of their CPD; whole school safeguarding training and understand the vulnerability of SEND children and understand that SEND children may be at higher risk of abuse or neglect.

Some indicators concerns could include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child, such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment
- Poor toileting arrangements
- Lack of stimulation
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification e.g., deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g., callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting; misappropriation of a child's finances
- Invasive procedures which are unnecessary or are carried out against the child's will
- A lack of knowledge about the impact of disability on the child
- A lack of knowledge about the child, e.g., not knowing the child's usual behaviour
- Not being able to understand the child's method of communication
- Confusing behaviours that may indicate the child is being abused with those associated with the child's disability
- Denial of the child's sexuality
- Behaviour, including sexually harmful behaviour or self-injury may be indicative of abuse
- Being aware that certain health/medical complications may influence the way symptoms present or are interpreted.

Our school has a specific SEND Policy. As best practice our school will ensure we:

- Provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum
- Identify and focus attention on action to support the child within the class
- Use the assessment processes to identify any learning difficulties
- Ensure ongoing observation and assessments provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning
- Help disabled children make their wishes and feelings known in respect of their care and treatment;
- Ensure that disabled children receive appropriate personal, health, and social education (including sex education);
- Make sure that all disabled children know how to raise concerns and giving them access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.
- Those disabled children with communication impairments should have available to them at all times a means of being heard;
- Close contact with families, and a culture of openness on the part of services;
- Guidelines and training for staff on good practice in intimate care; handling difficult behaviour; consent to treatment; anti-bullying strategies; and sexuality and sexual behaviour among young people;
- Guidelines and training for staff working with disabled children aged 16 and over to ensure that decisions about disabled children who lack capacity will be governed by the Mental Health Capacity Act once they reach the age of 16.
- Use specialist service needs/multi-agency approach if as a school we feel additional, support resources and interventions are required.

APPENDIX 2 - PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW IN CASES OF POSSIBLE, ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED ABUSE, OR SERIOUS CAUSE FOR CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD: FOR ALL STAFF MEMBERS

Teachers are in a unique position to identify and help children who may be being abused. Although all schools are required to have a named designated teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating child protection, this should not diminish the role all teachers have in protecting children. Child abuse usually comes to the attention of teachers in one of four ways:

- a direct allegation from the child being abused;
- a third party (e.g., friend, classmate) report;
- through the child's behaviour;
- or through observation of an injury to the child.

When a child makes a disclosure, or when concerns are received from other sources, do not investigate, ask leading questions, examine children, or promise confidentiality. You may ask questions of a clarifying nature – such as 'who, what, where, when, how?' or use the acronym TED – 'Tell me, 'Explain it to me', Describe it to me.'

Remember, the way in which you talk to the child may influence any subsequent legal proceedings. You need to be open and non-judgemental. Children making disclosures should be reassured and, if possible, at this stage, should be informed what action will be taken next.

As soon as possible write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed or noticed, said or done and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It is important to act swiftly to avoid delays.

As a general guide, it is important to remember the following:

SECRETS - A child's trust can place a heavy responsibility on teachers, particularly if they want the abuse to remain a secret. You should tell the child that if he or she is being hurt you will need to tell other people. The child may need to be reassured that you will only speak to those who need to know and that they will treat the matter confidentially.

LISTEN - Listen carefully to the child. Take what he or she says seriously as it is rare for a child to make entirely false allegations.

REASSURE - Reassure the child that he or she was right to tell and is not to blame for what happened, but do not promise confidentiality.

RECORD - As soon as possible after talking with the child, make a written record of what was said at the time, when and where the conversation took place and who was present. This must be accurate and not interpretation or assumption. Note any colloquial/slang words used by students and any language/behaviour inappropriate for the child's age – do not convert them into proper terms. Remember this may be used in any subsequent legal proceedings so note down too, how the child was behaving and the way in which they told you what was happening. This may indicate how the child was feeling.

For injuries in specific areas, record the location accurately – DO NOT take photographs or examine the child yourself.

SUPPORT - Get support for yourself. Listening to abused children can be very upsetting, and giving the child help

may be difficult, if you are not given support yourself. Experience of working with children is not, in itself, preparation for the distress abuse can raise.

REMEMBER - It takes courage and determination for a child to tell an adult that they are being, or have been, abused. When they do tell someone, it is usually a person who they feel they can trust and whom they feel is reliable. For reasons of confidentiality, only those people who need to know about the abuse should be told, and conversations about the child should always be held in private.

If the concern involves the conduct of a member of staff or volunteer, a visitor, a governor, a trainee or another young person or child, the DSL/Principal must be informed asap; if the concern is in reaction to your Principal, you must speak to your Governor. If you feel you cannot speak with your Governors, you must use your whistleblowing procedure and contact Duty & Advice/LADO for advice and support. (Appendix 6)

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

APPENDIX 3 – PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF/VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

As per KCSIE 2022, it is the responsibility of Brook Mead Aacdemy to ensure procedures are in place for dealing with concerns and/or allegations against those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges in a paid or unpaid capacity, including, members of staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors. Our procedures are consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance and KCSIE 2022 (see Part Four)

Inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers could take the following forms:

- **Physical**
  For example, the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects or rough physical handling.
- **Emotional**
  For example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, and attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality.
- **Sexual**
  For example, sexualised behaviour towards students, sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.
- **Neglect**
  For example, failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.

KCSIE 2022 states that LADO procedures are categorised in to 2 main areas:

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold
2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to as 'low level concerns'.
   Keeping children safe in education 2022 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Section one: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This refers to allegations that might indicate a person will pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position.

We follow the procedure below where it is alleged that anyone working on the school, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including outside of school)

Allegations about a member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) should be reported to the Principal (or Vice Principal their absence) immediately. The Principal (or Vice Principal) will then lead any investigation as the 'case manager.'

If an allegation concerns the Principal, the Chair of the Academy Council will be contacted immediately, who will consult with Children's Social Care and the LADO. In this situation, the Chair of the Academy Council will be the 'case manager.'

Initial response:

If a child has been harmed, or a child is at immediate risk of harm, or if the situation is an emergency, Children's Social Care and the police will be consulted as a matter of urgency.

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

I. **Looking after the welfare of the child**: the DSL (or a deputy) will act to make sure that the child is not at risk and refer cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care immediately

II. **Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation:** the case manager will act quickly to establish basic facts and then discuss the allegation with the LADO and agree a course of action.

The case manager should determine if there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation, e.g.

- ✓ establish if the person was in the school at the time
- ✓ establish if they could have come into contact with the child
- ✓ find out if there are any witnesses or CCTV footage

As soon as these basic facts are established, the case manager will call the LADO (Leicester City 0116 454 2440). The LADO will be able to support school's with when the individual should be informed of the allegation. A course of action will be agreed alongside Children's Social Care and the Police where appropriate, which may include:

- A strategy discussion where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm
- Making a risk assessment of the situation to ensure the safety of children

For further information on the LADO process, visit LSCPB | Local Authority Designated Officer (L.A.D.O.) (lcitylscb.org)

Section Two: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (Low Level)

Our school understands the importance of acknowledging, recording and reporting **all** safeguarding concerns, regardless of their perceived severity. We understand that, while a concern may be low-level, that concern can escalate over time to become much more serious.

Our school prides itself on creating a safe and prosperous environment for pupils, and our staff are expected to adhere to high standards of behaviour when it comes to professional conduct regarding pupils. The school has clear professional boundaries which all staff are made aware of and will adhere to. We are committed to ensuring that any safeguarding concerns are dealt with as soon as they arise and before they have had a chance to become more severe, to minimise the risk of harm posed to our pupils and other children.

It may be possible that a member of staff acts in a way that does not cause risk to children but is however inappropriate.

A member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should inform the Principal (or Vice Principal in their absence) about their concern (see 'Reporting Concern' below).

A **low-level concern** is defined as any concern had about an adult's behaviour towards, or concerning, a child that does not meet the harms threshold outline above in Section one of this appendix or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral at the time of its reporting. Low-level concerns refer to behaviour on the part of a staff member towards pupils that is considered inappropriate in line with statutory safeguarding advice, the Staff Code of Conduct, and the 'Appropriate and Inappropriate' behaviour section below.

While low-level concerns are, by their nature, less serious than concerns which meet the harms threshold, the school understands that many serious safeguarding concerns, e.g., child sexual abuse, often begin with low-level concerns, e.g., being overly friendly with children. The school will ensure that all staff are aware of the importance of recognising concerns before they escalate from low-level to serious, wherever possible.

Appropriate and inappropriate behaviour

The school will ensure that all staff members are aware of the standards of appropriate behaviour expected towards pupils (see the Code of Conduct). Staff will be aware that where there is any doubt regarding whether the behaviour of another adult is appropriate, this should be reported to the Principal (or Vice Principal in their absence) immediately.

Inappropriate behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour to behaviour which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. Examples of inappropriate behaviour that would constitute a low-level concern that should be reported:

- **Being overly friendly with children** – this could include, but is not limited to, communicating with a child through personal social media or allowing inappropriate conversations or enquiries to occur with pupils, e.g., conversations that are about a staff member's personal life or are of a sexual nature.
- **Having favourites** – this could include, but is not limited to, calling pupils by pet names or terms of endearment or buying pupils gifts.
- **Taking photographs of children on their personal mobile phones or devices**.
- **Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door**.
- **Using inappropriate, sexualised, intimidating or offensive language**.

Staff will be aware that some of the above low-level concerns may meet the harms threshold depending on certain factors, e.g., the age or needs of the child or the content of exchanged messages, and that some of the above incidents may not be concerns in context, e.g., a pre-approved, one-to-one meeting with a child behind a closed door between the child and a school counsellor who has received all appropriate safety checks.

Staff will also be made aware that behaviour which raises concerns may not be intentionally inappropriate, and that this does not negate the need to report the behaviour. Staff members who engage in low-level inappropriate behaviour in relation to pupils inadvertently will be made aware and supported to correct this behaviour in line with the Staff Code of Conduct. The Principal will also evaluate whether additional training would be beneficial for any staff members exhibiting concerning behaviour, or the whole staff where low-level concerning behaviour is seen more widely.

Reporting Concerns

Staff will report all safeguarding concerns they have to the Principal (or Vice Principal in their absence) immediately, in line with the procedures laid out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff members will be aware that concerns are still worth reporting even if they do not seem serious.

Staff members will report their concerns directly to the Principal, Rita Hindocha. When submitting concerns, staff will take care to ensure that they observe confidentiality procedures and protect the identity of all individuals to which the

concern pertains as far as possible.

Staff members may request anonymity when reporting a concern, and the school will endeavour to respect this as far as possible. The school will not, however, promise anonymity to staff members who report concerns in case the situation arises where they must be named, e.g., where it is necessary for a fair disciplinary hearing. In line with the Whistleblowing Policy, staff will be protected from potential repercussions caused by reporting a genuine concern.

- Where a low-level concern relates to the Principal, it should be reported to the chair of the Academy Council.
- Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency or a contractor to work in the school, staff will also be required to report this to the Principal (or Vice Principal in their absence), who will, in turn, inform the employer of the subject of the concern.
- All concerns reported to the Principal will be documented in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

Self-Reporting

On occasion, a member of staff may feel as though they have acted in a way that could be misinterpreted or could appear compromising to others. They may realise, upon reflection, that their conduct falls below the standards set out in the Staff Code of Conduct or could be construed as 'inappropriate behaviour,' as noted above.
The school will ensure that an environment is maintained that encourages staff members to self-report if they feel as though they have acted inappropriately or in a way that could be construed as inappropriate. The Principal, SLT and DSL(s) will, to the best of their abilities, maintain a culture of approachability for staff members, and will be understanding and sensitive towards those who self-report.

Staff members who self-report will not be treated more favourably during any resulting investigations than staff members who were reported by someone else; however, their self-awareness and intentions will be taken into consideration.

Evaluating Concerns

Where the Principal is notified of a safeguarding concern, they will use their professional judgement to determine if the concern is low-level or if it must be immediately escalated, e.g., where a child is at immediate risk of harm. When deciding if a concern is low-level, the Principal may discuss the concern confidentially with a member of the DSL and/or SLT team and will seek advice from the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) where there is any doubt about how seriously to take the concern.

To evaluate a concern, the Principal/SLT/DSL will:

- Speak to the individual who raised the concern to determine the facts and obtain any relevant additional information.
- Review the information and determine whether the behaviour displayed by the individual about whom the concern was reported is consistent with the Staff Code of Conduct and the law.
- Determine whether the concern, when considered alongside any other low-level concerns previously made about the same individual, should be reclassified as an allegation that may meet the harm threshold. In this case, they will seek advice from the LADO as noted above.
- Speak to the individual about whom the concern has been raised to inform them of the concern and to give them an opportunity to respond to it.
- Ensure that accurate and detailed records are kept of all internal and external conversations regarding evaluating the concern, and any actions or decisions taken.

Acting on Concerns

Where the concern is unfounded: If it is discovered upon evaluation that the low-level concern refers to behaviour that was not considered to be in breach of the Staff Code of Conduct, the Principal will speak to the individual about whom the concern was made to discuss their behaviour, why and how the behaviour may have been misconstrued, and what

they can do to avoid such misunderstandings in the future. The Principal will also speak to the individual who shared the concern, outlining why the behaviour reported is consistent with school standards and the law. The Principal will take care to ensure that conversations with individuals who reported concerns that transpired to be unfounded do not deter that individual from reporting concerns in the future.

The Principal will discuss the concern confidentially with a member of the SLT/DSL team to discern whether the behaviour, and the reporting of this behaviour, is indicative of ambiguity in the school's policies or procedures, or the training it offers to staff. Where such ambiguity is found, the SLT/DSL team and Principal will work together to resolve this with input from other staff members, as necessary.

Where the concern is low-level, the following procedure will be followed:

- The Principal holds a meeting with the individual about whom the concern was reported, during which they will:
  - ✓ Talk to the individual in a non-accusatory and sympathetic manner.
  - ✓ Inform them of how their behaviour was perceived by the individual who reported the concern (without naming them, where possible).
  - ✓ Clearly state what about their behaviour was inappropriate and problematic.
  - ✓ Discuss the reasons for the behaviour with the individual.
  - ✓ Inform the individual clearly what about their behaviour needs to change.
  - ✓ Discuss any support that the individual may require in order to achieve the proper standards of behaviour.
  - ✓ Allow the individual the opportunity to respond to the concern in their own words.
  - ✓ Ask the individual to re-read the Staff Code of Conduct.

- The Principal will consider whether the individual should receive guidance, supervision or further training.
- Where considered appropriate in the circumstances, the headteacher will develop an action plan, with input from the individual, that outlines ongoing and transparent monitoring of the individual's behaviour and any other support measures implemented to ensure the staff member's behaviour improves.
- Where it is necessary to undergo an investigation into the behaviour, this will be done discreetly, and information will only be disclosed to individuals on a need-to-know basis.
- Where any pupil or other individual has been made to feel uncomfortable by the individual's behaviour, they will be offered pastoral support, where appropriate.

The Principal will ensure that all details of the low-level concern, including any resultant actions taken, are recorded, and securely stored.

The specific approach to handling low-level concerns will be adapted on a case-by-case basis. It is unlikely that a low-level concern will result in disciplinary procedures; however, the Disciplinary Policy may be applied where necessary. Where behaviour does not improve over a longer period, the concerns will be escalated and dealt with as an allegation.

<u>Where the concern is serious</u>

The Principal may decide upon evaluation that a concern is more serious than the reporter originally thought, e.g., when viewed in conjunction with other evidence or other concerns made about the same individual. Where this decision is made, the concern will be escalated, and dealt with as an allegation.

<u>Record keeping</u>

The school will retain all records of low-level concerns. The Principal will ensure that all records include the most accurate and up-to-date information and will store them securely. Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached, and the outcome.
- The name of the individual sharing concerns – if the individual wishes to remain anonymous, this will be respected as far as reasonably possible.

The Principal will periodically review the recent low-level concerns made to ensure that they are being appropriately dealt with and to check for any concerning behaviour patterns amongst the staff cohort as a whole.

Records of low-level concerns will not be kept in the personnel file of the individuals to whom the concerns pertain, unless there have been multiple low-level concerns made about the same individual.

Where a concern is thought to be serious and is processed as an allegation, records of this will be kept in staff personnel files. Where multiple low-level concerns have been made about the same individual, these will be kept together, and in chronological order.

Where an allegation is made about an individual who has previously been subject to such allegations, or where a low-level concern is reclassified as a serious concern after meeting the harms threshold, all records of low-level concerns about that individual will be moved to the staff personnel file and kept alongside records of the allegation.

The Principal will ensure that all records are kept in a manner that is consistent with the Data Protection Policy. Records will be kept confidential and securely destroyed after the staff member to whom the concerns pertain has left the school. The school will only refer to concerns about a staff member in employment references where they have amounted to a substantiated safeguarding allegation, e.g., it has met the harms threshold and has been found to have basis through investigation, or where it is not exclusively a safeguarding issue and forms part of an issue that would normally be included in a reference, e.g., misconduct or poor performance. Low-level safeguarding concerns will not be included in a reference, unless they have comprised a pattern of behaviour that has met the harms threshold.

APPENDIX 4 - GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE: FOR ALL STAFF MEMBERS

Whilst they may in common law be regarded as acting in loco parentis, teachers and carers in school should remember that they are not able to take the place of parents in providing physical comfort. This is not to say that all physical contact is inappropriate, rather that the professional context demands circumspection and a sense of fitness for purpose.

Teachers of very young children of nursery and Key stage 1 age will naturally need to engage in more physical contact than teachers of older children. Comforting a distressed child who may just have started school will not be an unusual occurrence. Similarly, in the special school setting, some children may tend towards demanding physical attention. In such circumstances, the contact by the adult will be for re-assurance and may involve physical closeness (e.g., holding the child's hand or placing hands on the child's shoulders). Hugging and kissing would be inappropriate for other than the parent, even though the child may want to initiate it.

Administration of medicines and first aid requires careful codes of conduct and procedures. These should be laid down by local authority or health authority or in individual school guidelines and followed meticulously. As a rule of thumb, teachers should not administer medicines. If the child had an adverse reaction to a medicine given by a teacher, the teacher could be held liable and charged with negligence.

Administration of first aid should be undertaken by a qualified first aider. Where none is available, the minimum steps should be taken to ensure the child's safety and the emergency services should be called.

Teachers may sometimes be called upon to intervene physically if a child or children are in danger of injuring themselves or others - as in a fight in the school yard. It is important that in such circumstances the minimum possible reasonable force is used. Where possible another colleague should be called upon to assist, both to minimise the risk of injury to the teacher intervening and to act as witness that reasonable force and no more was used. After such an event a clear record of what took place should be made, including where possible statements from witnesses. The Principal should be informed.

One-to-one situations with pupils need to be carefully and consciously managed. Some teaching, as with peripatetic music staff, may often suggest one-to-one organisation. Where pupils can be paired for such lessons, it is preferable. Where this is not possible and in other situations of individual interviews with pupils, it is advisable to use a room with a window where others can see in or to leave the door open. If confidentiality makes this difficult, then another member of staff should be informed that the interview is taking place.

If a child becomes distressed, support and re-assurance should be offered through calming words rather than through physical contact. Teachers should not become involved with children's personal problems beyond listening and being sensitive to them in order to refer the child to the most appropriate source of help or counselling.

APPENDIX 5 - INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

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

2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

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

3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

   The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

   - Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
   - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
   - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
   - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

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

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

6. Indicators of vulnerability include:

   - Identity Crisis – the student is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences

discomfort about their place in society;

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

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.
More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues; and
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis

APPENDIX 6 – SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT BETWEEN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This appendix is based on the Local Authority Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy 2022/3

Introduction

All our staff working with children are aware and maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. This will also develop a culture of respect.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. In our school, we are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college, including intimate personal relationships.

Vulnerable groups

We recognise that all children can be at risk however we acknowledge that some groups are more vulnerable. This can include experience of abuse within their family; living with domestic violence; young people in care; children who go

missing; children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities) or have other protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.

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. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQI children are at greater risk. Some risks can be especially compounded where children who are LGBTQ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open with. Our staff therefore understand and endeavour to reduce any additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for our children to speak out or share their concerns.

Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may display other behaviour such as antisocial behaviour. Boys report high levels of victimisation in areas where they are affected by gangs. We recognise that both boys and girls experience child sexual violence and harassment /peer on peer abuse.

Staff should use their professional curiosity, and be aware of indicators, which may signal that 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.

It is **essential** 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 by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Our policy will refer to children as victims and perpetrators within this policy however we will be conscious of how we describe children when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which most appropriately matches their individual situation.

Along with providing support to children who are victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment, our school will consider the need to provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. A child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of the school. Taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support, can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children, adult students and school staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

Our staff will respect confidentiality and anonymity of a child or young person reporting incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment including situations where the child or young person asks staff not to tell anyone about the incident; making referrals against the wishes of the young person and considering the potential impact of social media breaching confidentiality. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.

Our lead DSL (or a deputy) will endeavour to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the lead DSL (or a deputy) decide to make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, our DSL and staff will handle all incidents extremely carefully. The reasons for referral will be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support will be offered, taking into consideration the best interest of the child at all times.

Where incidents of sexual violence and harassment have been raised, our staff, where applicable, will take into consideration the impact on siblings and understand the importance of intra familial harms.

Useful definitions

Sexual violence

It is important that schools and colleges are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence in this policy, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual violence.

When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 including, Rape, Assault by Penetration, Sexual Assault: (Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.) Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

Consent

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual harassment

For this policy, when referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. 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.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, 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 (schools 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;

Online sexual harassment

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
It may include:

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. (Taking and sharing nude photographs of U18s is a criminal offence).
- Sharing of unwanted explicit content.
- Upskirting (the act of taking a photograph of underneath a person's skirt without their consent – this became a criminal offence in 2019)

- Sexualised online bullying.
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media.
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

Our school will challenge and deal with sexual harassment so as to create a culture that addresses inappropriate behaviours and promotes a healthy and safe environment to minimise potential sexual violence.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context. When considering HSB, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors (See Simon Hackett's continuum model later in this document).

Legal framework

Brook Mead Academy recognises our statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children with regard to Keeping children safe in education and Working Together to Safeguard Children and are aware of our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA). Being subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment may breach any or all these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances.

Whole school approach to Prevention

We note that the best responses to child sexual violence and harassment are those which take a whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection. This means involving everyone in our school, including the Academy Council, all the staff, children, adult students and parents and carers.

We actively seek to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of sexual violence and harassment for our pupils.

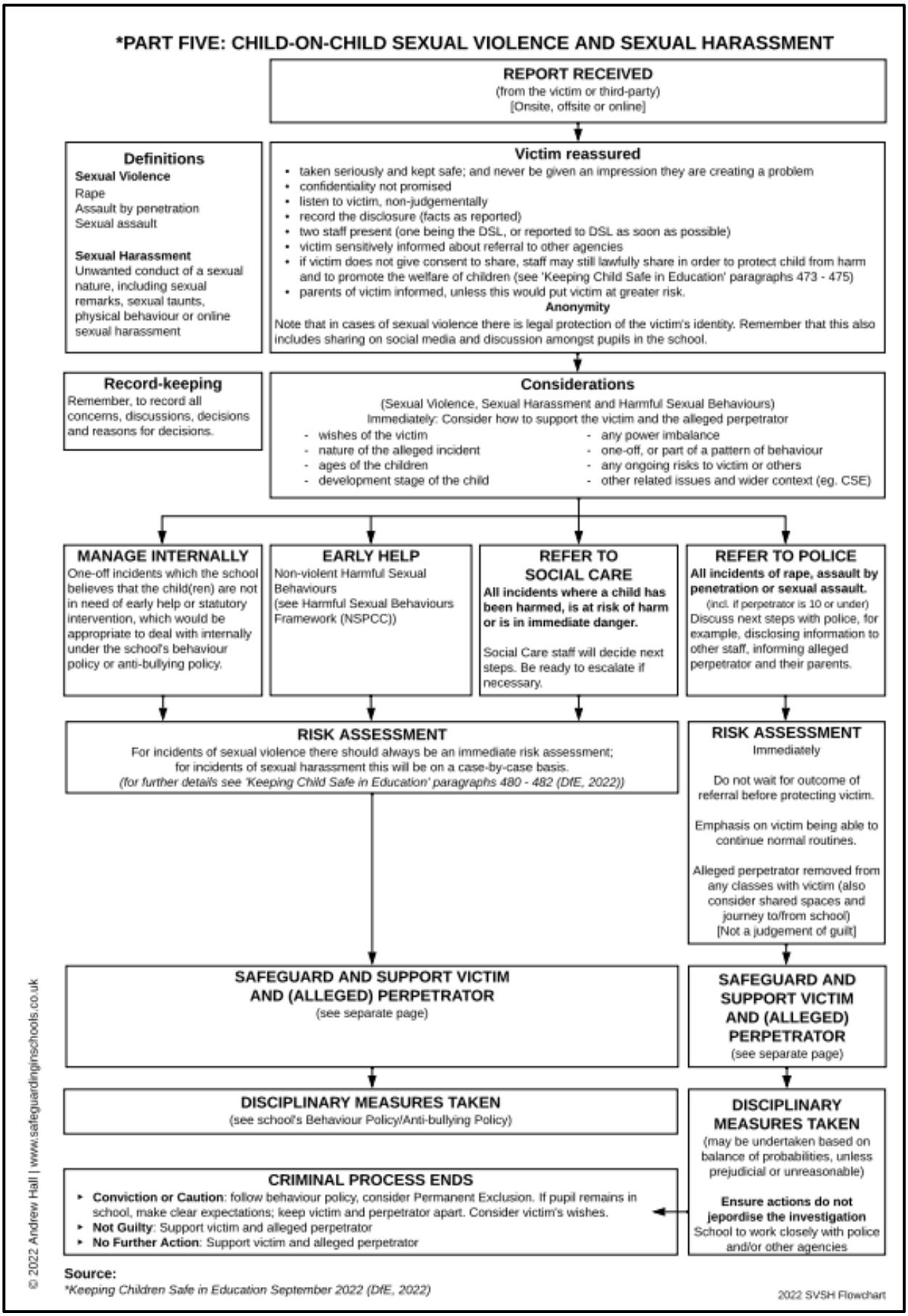
We have systems in place that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment. Children know their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

We implement the following as **prevention** against child sexual violence and harassment in Brook Mead Academy:

- *Safeguarding and PSHE curriculum that teach our scholars about healthy and respectful relationships, gender stereotypes, equality and Child on Child abuse and promote the message that sexual violence and harassment is always wrong and will not be tolerated at Brook Mead Academy. to widen opportunities for disclosure*
- *Specific section on child-on-child abuse on our "Where to get help at BMA" posters.*
- *Child-on-Child abuse focus for annual safeguarding training for **all** staff – including how to challenge behaviours on the lower end of the Harmful Sexual Behaviour continuum.*
- *Specific flowchart for DSLs detailing the response to all cases of HSB or suspected HSB including a specialised Risk Management Plan (RMP).*
- *Enhanced tracking and monitoring with specific subsections for HSB.*
- *Enhanced opportunities for disclosure including a dedicated safeguarding email and a "talk to us" post box – both of which are frequently communicated to our scholars along with external routes of support such as ChildLine and CEOP.*
- *Whole school focus on being "an UPSTANDER" and taking action to support their peers.*

- *Child-on-child information relayed to parents via MCAS alerts, text messages and dedicated safeguarding E-Bulletins.*
- *Scholars are regularly informed about the school's approach to such issues, including its zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of sexual violence and harassment.*
- *Regular scholar voice opportunities – especially with scholars from more "vulnerable groups".*

*PART FIVE: CHILD-ON-CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT



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Source:
**Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022 (DfE, 2022)*

2022 SVSH Flowchart

Responding to alleged incident of sexual violence and sexual harassment

All reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment will be considered and managed on a case-by-case basis with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy taking a leading role using their professional judgement and supported by other agencies such as social care or the police as required.

In cases where there are child protection concerns, a concern about possible criminal behaviour or particularly complex scenarios referrals should be made to police and social care as per local processes.

<u>The immediate response to a report</u>

- We take all reports seriously and will reassure the victim that they will be supported and kept safe. This will be in all cases including if the abuse took place away from school, is not recent and/ or is online.
- All our staff will be trained to manage a report.
- Staff will not promise confidentiality as the concern will need to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or social care) staff will however only share the report with those people who are necessary to progress it.
- A written report will be made as soon after the interview as possible recording the facts as presented by the child. These may be used as part of a statutory assessment if the case is escalated later.
- Where the report includes an online element, we will follow advice on searching, screening and confiscation. The staff will not view or forward images unless unavoidable and only if another member of staff (preferably the DSL) is present.
- The DSL will be informed as soon as possible.
- If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if it can be justified to be in the public interest, for example, to protect children from harm and to promote the welfare of children.
- The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will consider the following:
    - ✓ parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk);
    - ✓ the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to children's social care; and
    - ✓ rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police.
- The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) decide to go ahead and make a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, this will be handled extremely carefully, the reasons will be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support should be offered.
- We will do all we reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs' assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. At all times, the school or college should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The risk and needs' assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- Whether there may have been other victims
- The alleged perpetrator
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments will be recorded on our safeguard system and be kept under review.
The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and any specialist services as required. The school risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments should be used to inform the schools or college's approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.

Actions following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

Following an incident, we will consider:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers
- The ages and vulnerabilities of the children involved.
- The developmental stages of the children involved.
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature, or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school staff, and other related issues and wider context?
- Other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.
- Whilst the school or college establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police: The perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- We will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises and on transport to and from the school. These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

Options to manage the report

<u>Manage internally</u>

In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, we may decide that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising the behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support. This decision will be made based on the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All decisions, and discussions around making these decisions will be recorded and stored by the DSL on our safeguarding systems.

In line with this, we may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to social care following locally agreed protocols.

Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy will be working alongside,

and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.

Reporting to the Police

Any report to the police will generally be made through social care as above. The designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) will follow local processes for referrals.

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this will be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.

Where a report has been made to the police, the school will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

Where there is a criminal investigation, we will work closely with the relevant agencies to support all children involved (especially potential witnesses). Where required, advice from the police will be sought.

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator, we will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

The end of the criminal process

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all children. We will consider any suitable action following our behaviour policy. If the perpetrator remains in school/academy we will be very clear as to our expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions we think are reasonable and proportionate about the perpetrator's timetable.

Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school or college.

We will ensure all children involved are protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support and offer protection to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary.

A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. We will continue to support all parties in this instance.

Support for Children Affected by Sexual-Assault

Support for victims of sexual assault is available from a variety of local agencies and national organisations (see Guidance section at the end of this Appendix)

We will support the victim of sexual assault to remain in school but if they are unable to do so we will enable them to continue their education elsewhere. This decision will be made only at the request of the child and their family.

If they are moved, we will ensure the new school is aware of the ongoing support they may need. The DSL will support this move.

Where there is a criminal investigation, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any shared classes with the victim, and we will also consider how best to keep them a reasonable distance apart on the school premises or on school transport. This is in the best interest of the children concerned and should not be perceived to be a judgement of guilt before any legal proceedings. We will work closely with the police.

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, we may take suitable action, if we have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, we may, if we have not already done so, consider any suitable sanctions using our behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion.

Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support will be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis.

All the above will be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements should be kept under review.

Harmful sexual behaviours (HSB)

The NSPCC definition of HSB is: -
"Sexual behaviours expressed by children…that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child…or adult."

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- We will think carefully about the terminology we use to describe the “alleged perpetrator(s)” or “perpetrator(s)”.
- Our responsibilities lie in balancing the need to safeguard the victim (and all other children, adult students and staff at the school) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

- A child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of the school. We will work with professionals as required to understand

why a child may have abused a peer. It is important to remember that, as a child, any alleged perpetrator(s) is entitled to, deserving of, and should be provided with, a high level of support to help them understand and overcome the reasons for their behaviour and help protect other children by limiting the likelihood of them abusing again.

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s) and nature and frequency of the allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. An alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children. HSB in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.
- It is important that the perpetrator(s) is also given the correct support to try to stop them re-offending and to address any underlying trauma that may be causing this behaviour. Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.
- Advice on behaviour and discipline in schools is clear that teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. If the perpetrator(s) is to be excluded the decision must be lawful, reasonable and fair.
- School can be a significant protective factor for children who have displayed HSB, and continued access to school, with a comprehensive safeguarding management plan in place, is an important factor to consider before final decisions are made It is important that if an alleged perpetrator(s) does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children, adult students and staff. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file.

We recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour (Harmful Sexual Behaviour HSB). Simon Hackett (2010) has proposed a continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people, from those that are normal, to those that are highly deviant. We will use this model to consider the range of sexual behaviours:

Working with parents and carers

We will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has

been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportional in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

We will carefully consider what information we provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved. In some cases, children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view and it will be important for the school to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

It is good practice for the school to meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

It is also good practice for the school to meet with alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact an alleged perpetrator, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education. The reason behind any decisions should be explained. Support for the alleged perpetrator should be discussed. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would generally attend any such meetings. Consideration to the attendance of other agencies should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Guidance and further resources

- Keeping children safe in education
  Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated December 2020)
  www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children
- Government guidance -Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges- Advice for schools and colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, September 2021. Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Ofsted – Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges June 2021. www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges
- Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership Board procedures on harmful sexual behaviours Harmful Sexual Behaviour (proceduresonline.com)
- Further information about consent can be found here: What is sexual consent? | Rape Crisis England & Wales | Rape Crisis England & Wales
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people
- NSPCC and Research in Practice's Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework:www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/publications/harmful-sexual-behaviour-framework.pdf
- Barnardo's - UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.
- Lucy Faithful Foundation - UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.
- Marie Collins Foundation – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.
- NSPCC - Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.
- Rape Crisis - National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres.
- UK Safer Internet Centre - Provides advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.
- Anti-Bullying Alliance - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support. •

- The Survivors Trust- UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.
- Victim Support - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.
- Childline provides free and confidential advice for children and young people. Toolkits
- ask AVA - The Ask AVA prevention platform has been created to support education practitioners across the UK to develop and deliver a comprehensive programme to stop Violence Against Women and Girls.
- NSPCC - Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.
- NSPCC - Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse. • NSPCC also provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework
- Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire - Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.
- Contextual Safeguarding Network – self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB. Confidentiality
- Gillick competency Fraser guidelines - Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.
- NSPCC: Things to know and consider Information Sharing
- Government information sharing advice - Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.
- Information Commissioner's Office: Education - Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK Further information on sharing nudes and semi-nudes
- London Grid for Learning-collection of advice - Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

Early Help

What is Early Help?

'Early help' describes any service (including schools) that supports children and families as soon as problems emerge to prevent issues escalating.

How can I identify a scholar who may benefit from Early Help?

All staff at Brook Mead Academy should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for Early Help for a scholar who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- Has Special Educational Needs;
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour;
- Is in family circumstances presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health difficulties, domestic violence, poverty, inadequate housing, parent in prison;
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or Neglect.

What Early Help support is available at BMA?

- 1:1 mentoring, counselling and targeted group work.
- Peer to peer support, scholar parliament and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- Parent support—events, afternoon teas etc.

What should I do if I am concerned about a member of staff?

If you have *any* concerns (including "low-level") about the conduct of another member of staff, you must report this to the principal, Rita Hindocha, immediately. If the concern is in relation to the principal, concerns should be forwarded to Suzanne Overton-Edwards (Chair and Safeguarding Lead of the Academy Council).

What are low level concerns?

A low-level concern is a concern, no matter how small, even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that a person working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the Guidance for safer working practice (2022), including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to make a referral to the LADO

Low level concerns are not insignificant—a teacher having "favourites", or a member of staff using sexualised language, for example. These concerns need to be reported to the principal immediately.

BROOK MEAD ACADEMY

Safeguarding at Brook Mead Academy

Brook Mead Academy is committed to keeping all scholars safe both at school and when off school premises. The school aims to create a culture of vigilance, recognising that ***'it could happen here'***.

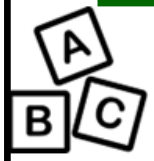
The Safeguarding Team 2022/23

Danielle Aylmer-Teago
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Rita Hindocha
Deputy DSL/Principal

Laura Samuel
Deputy DSL/Assistant HOY

Blexley Palmer
Deputy DSL/Assistant HOY



Spotting the signs of abuse: ABC

Unfortunately, not all children will verbally disclose when they are experiencing abuse. It is therefore imperative that all staff are vigilant to the signs that could indicate that a child has been or is at risk of being harmed or abused.

Remember A B C

Appearance: For example; has the scholars appearance changed? Do they have a visible or unusual injury? Do they have consistently poor hygiene?

Behaviour: For example, is the scholar becoming withdrawn, do they appear overly anxious, are they being disruptive or engaging in self-harming behaviour? Are they socialising with others differently?

Communication: For example; is the scholar talking aggressively, using sexual language or becoming secretive. Has their engagement in your lesson decreased?

Any change in a scholar could indicate that they are being or have been harmed or abused.

What to do if a scholar makes a disclosure?

If a scholar makes a disclosure, the immediate response of the person receiving the disclosure is of utmost importance. It is important that all staff utilise the "3 Rs" model when a child discloses.

1. **Receive** – Listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, and always being non-judgemental. If you need to clarify anything always use TED questions (tell, explain describe).

2. **Reassure** – Reassure them that they have done the right thing. Emphasise and reassure them that they are not to blame. Be clear about boundaries and explain that you will need to pass this information on to someone who has experience supporting scholars in similar situations. DO NOT promise confidentiality.

3. **Report** – Report concerns to the safeguarding email and follow up immediately with a DSL or a Deputy. See the section "What to do if you have a safeguarding concern at BMA" for more information.

What to do if you have a safeguarding concern at BMA?

Immediately email the dedicated safeguarding email, making a detailed, factual report on why you are concerned. If a scholar has disclosed information, always use the child's own words.

safeguarding@brook-tmet.uk

Once you have submitted your concern to the safeguarding email, you should then follow up by *talking to the DSL or a Deputy DSL.* If you are teaching, you should email on-call with the subject line "SAFEGUARDING" . Do not leave it until you are free or after the school day.

Once the report is received, the DSL or Deputy DSL will review the concern and take any necessary action. The DSL/ Deputy DSL will then record this information onto Bromcom and record action taken.