



Oakwood Academy

Part of **KINGS ACADEMY TRUST**

Child Protection Policy

(Including the Safeguarding of all children.)

IMPORTANT

OAKWOOD ACADEMY WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY FORM OF ABUSE, RADICALISATION OR EXTREMISM TOWARDS CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE

OAKWOOD ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

Promoting learning excellence – Inclusion beyond the barriers.

OAKWOOD ACADEMY MORAL PURPOSE

“Oakwood strives to inspire all learners to believe achieve and succeed so that we can change lives for the better and prepare our learners for a successful future.”

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

If you are worried about a child or young person speak to the DSL (Lisa Southwood and Darren Jones or DDSL (Leanne Campbell)

“Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility”

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KEY CONTACTS

Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion for Kings Academy Trust –

Mrs M Navin

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Lisa Southwood and Mr Darren Jones (all sites)

Designated Safeguarding Lead 6th Form - Miss E Capell

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead 6th Form - Mr D O'Sullivan

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Leanne Campbell

Deputy Safeguarding Lead Willows - Ms Rachel Parry

Named Governor for Child Protection/Designated Safeguarding Governor – Mrs J Martin

Designated Looked after children lead – Mr Darren Jones

Designated Mental Health Lead – Mrs Catherine King

Named Appropriate Adult – Mrs Leanne Campbell

Salford LA Prevent and Cohesion Lead – Denee Cassidy.

Denee.cassidy@salford.gov.uk

The Bridge Partnership for child protection referrals – Tel: 0161 603 4500 or visit <https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/safeguarding-children/worried-about-a-child/>

The Mash Team for child protection referrals – Tel 01925 443322 or visit <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/mars>

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GMP Public Protection Investigation Unit (PPIU) – for referrals/consultation about crime-related safeguarding concerns – tel: 0161 856 5171 or e mail parklane.ppiu@gmp.police.uk

Managing allegations against an employee including supply volunteers - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Tel: (Salford) 0161 603 4350 / 4445 or (Warrington) 01925 442079 LADO@warrington.gov.uk

Managing allegations against adults who work with children | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership

<https://www.warringtonsafeguardingpartnerships.org.uk/p/i-work-or-volunteer-with-children-and-young-people/managing-allegations-lado-process>

Channel Helpline: 020 7340 7264

AIMS:

To safeguard and promote the welfare and well-being of children and young people at our school. When the term children is used this includes everyone under the age of 18.

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

Oakwood Academy aims focus on ensuring that good outcomes for all children are achieved. Schools, colleges, early years and childcare settings, and other educational providers have a pivotal role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Our insight and co-operation are vital to the successful delivery of multi- agency safeguarding arrangements. The staff in our school, play an important role in building relationships, identifying concerns and providing direct support to children. They may be the first trusted adult to whom children report safeguarding concerns.

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This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), the [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#).

Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

Part 1 of the schedule to the [Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), which places a duty on non-maintained special schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

[The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

[Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

[The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)

[The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

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[The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children. (*Kinship care arrangements are defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023-page 158/159*)
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the [Children's Social Care National Framework](#)
- Oakwood Academy is part of the Kings Academy Trust. This policy sets out Oakwood Academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend the school.
- All staff are important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating

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- The school staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
- The School will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans.
- Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school and beyond.
- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Any staff member who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral process. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
- Oakwood Academy has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy who support staff to carry out their safeguarding duties. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
- The Teachers' Standards 2012 states that teachers and Head teachers should safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- All staff should be aware of the Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct, Missing from Education procedures and the role of the DSL.
- All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of.

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- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 recognises schools as relevant agencies.

As part of this the school will:

- have a clear understanding of our responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children in, and how we will discharge them
- co-operate with Safeguarding Partners to improve, implement, and monitor effectiveness of the local safeguarding arrangements
- share information and data about safeguarding issues and concerns affecting the children involved in our school to contribute to local priorities
- ensure local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are fully understood, and rigorously applied with our school.

DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

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

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. including neglect and exploitation. Safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following **safeguarding partners** ([Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](https://www.warringtonsafeguardingpartnerships.org.uk)) & ([warringtonsafeguardingpartnerships.org.uk](https://www.warringtonsafeguardingpartnerships.org.uk))

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

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

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would

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want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

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

EQUALITY STATEMENT

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language (EAL)
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are Cared for or previously Cared for (see section 12)

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- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

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

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education, which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships
 - Boundaries and consent
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
 - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual and criminal exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
 - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

All staff will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually

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- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems that support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff Code of Conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputy DSL/s, the behaviour policy, online safety that includes the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The [Early Help Assessment process](#) and their role in it, including identifying emerging need, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to The Bridge/Mash Partnership and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sextortion, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online

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- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHER - DSL

The Executive Head Teacher has prime responsibility for leading the school in fulfilling the ethos and policies set down by the governing body and Kings Academy Trust including those set out below in the responsibilities for the Named Governor.

In such a role the Executive Head Teacher along with the DSL, should they not be the same person, will ensure that safeguarding is central to whole school policy and practice, embedded in the delivery of the curriculum and in all systems for managing the school.

Part of the means of demonstrating such leadership is in attending safeguarding update training, for schools within Salford attend the SSCP training at least once every 2 years. Such leadership is also demonstrated by embedding safeguarding awareness into the school's organisational development and training programmes.

The Executive Headteacher/Head of School

The Executive headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
 - Are informed of our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
 - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
 - Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
 - Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent

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- Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this

For schools within Kings Academy trust that have an early years setting they will

- Ensure the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)

The DSL is a the Executive Headteacher and the Head of School. Our DSL is Mrs L Southwood and Mr D Jones. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

When the DSL is absent, the deputy– Mrs L Campbell – will act as cover.

If the DSL and deputy are not available, Mrs M Navin, Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

- The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children’s social care (The Bridge/Mash Partnership), Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour

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- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school

The DSL will also:

- Meet weekly with the DSL/DDSL's to complete safeguarding supervision
- Liaise with local authority managers, Safeguarding in Schools Officer, designated officers and social workers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputy/deputies are set out in their job description.
- (For Salford DSL/DDSL's) Ensure that he/she has attended the working together to safeguard Children 1-day course and the Guest speak Level 3 Course. All DSL/DDSL's to attend 2 year refresher training and Annual Safeguarding refresher training to keep knowledge and skills up to date.
- Ensure that the Executive Head Teacher is kept fully informed of any concerns – especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This will include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019 \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812222/pace-code-c-2019-accessible.pdf) (www.gov.uk)
- Undertake more in-depth Prevent awareness training including extremist and terrorist ideologies.
- Liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*. There should always be cover for this role.
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

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- Work with the Headteacher 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 or college 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
- Ensure that he/she attends all Designated Teacher Seminars on behalf of the school (or arranges for the Deputy DSL to attend if exceptionally unable to do so themselves).
- Ensure that all staff who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children effectively and that this is kept up to date by refresher training at 18 month intervals
- Ensure that all new staff receive safeguarding children induction within 15 working days of commencement of their contract.
- Ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for safeguarding children within 7 working days of their commencement of work.
- Ensure that the school operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the Greater Manchester and Salford Safeguarding Children Procedures.

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- Ensure that the Designated Governor for Safeguarding is kept fully informed of any concerns and develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services.
- Decide upon the appropriate level of response to specific concerns about a child e.g. discuss with parents, or refer to the Bridge Partnership.
- Liaise and work with Salford's the Bridge Partnership over suspected cases of child abuse.
- Ensure that accurate safeguarding records relating to individual children are kept separate from the academic file via the use of CPOMS in a secure place, marked 'Strictly Confidential' and are passed securely should the child transfer to a new provision. The originating school should consider whether it needs to retain a copy of the records (for example, if a sibling continues to attend the school). If a copy is retained the reason for this should be recorded
- Submit reports to, and ensure the school's attendance at, child protection conferences contributing to decision making.
- Ensure the school's delivery of actions planned to safeguard the child (e.g. through core group participation).
- Ensure that the school effectively monitors children, about whom there are concerns, including notifying Salford's The Bridge team when there is an unexplained absence of more than two days for a child who is the subject of a child protection plan
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support and advice in respect of concerns about the child's welfare.
- The DSL/Deputy will always be available during school hours.
- Liaise with the Mental Health Lead and, where available, The Mental Health Support Team within the school, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

THE GOVERNING BOARD & TRUST BOARD

The governing board/Trust Board will:

Governing bodies, trustees, management committees and proprietors must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to the Keeping

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children safe in education 2025 guidance, ensuring that Safeguarding policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times

Governing bodies, trustees and proprietors will ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This 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 schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. All Governor Safeguarding training will be regularly updated.

Governing bodies and proprietors will be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 2010²², (including the Public Sector Equality Duty²³), Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. For further information and guidance on Data protection, please follow the link

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools>

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead or, safeguarding Trustee to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure all governors undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety at induction, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:

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- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
- Reviewing the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards and ensure that:
 - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
 - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
 - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
 - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns, no matter how small, or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
 - That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
 - Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
 - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
 - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
 - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate. The CEO will act as the case manager in the event an allegation is made against an executive head teacher

All governors & trustees will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

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NAMED GOVERNOR FOR SAFEGUARDING

The named Governor for Safeguarding at Oakwood Academy is Mrs J Martin. Governing bodies (and proprietors) will ensure online safety is an interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing their whole school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and procedures, planning the curriculum and parental engagement.

They will ensure the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place which regularly review their effectiveness. All staff are to understand their role in this and DSL/DDSLs are expected to have the 'lead responsibility'. Please follow the link below to see the newly published standards around filtering and monitoring.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

The role of the Named Governor is key to ensuring that the Governing Board fulfils its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children. The Named Governor will therefore ensure that the school:

- Has an effective safeguarding children policy in place that follows local procedures. This must include procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child sexual harassment and abuse. Policies will be reviewed annually.
- Recruits staff and volunteers in line with safer recruitment processes.
- Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff, including supply staff and volunteers.
- Has a designated senior member of staff for dealing with safeguarding children issues.
- Ensure that **all** staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online) (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually. This will provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, both on-line and in their daily life.
- Ensure that those staff who work directly with children read **at least** Part One and Annex A of this guidance and have the mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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- Provides regular quality assurance reports to the Governing Board in relation to policy, procedures, audits and Section 11 statutory requirements.
- Liaises with the Headteacher to ensure that deficiencies in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay.

Virtual school heads

Virtual School Heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils on Child Protection or Child in Need Plans. The Education Advisor within the Virtual School Team provides advice, guidance and some case oversight work for this cohort and liaises with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All staff will follow the Salford Safeguarding Childrens Partnership's process and principles for sharing information, [Information Sharing and Confidentiality | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) and the Headteacher and the DSL understand the statutory guidance regarding information sharing outlined in [Working together to safeguard children 2023](#). The governing board will follow the information sharing procedures detailed in Part 2 of [Keeping children safe in education](#)

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- 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
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

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- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
 - 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 The Bridge/MashPartnership
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can, to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment – for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping and allegations of abuse against staff.

HOLDING AND SHARING INFORMATION

The importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is critical, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

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- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school/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 (UK GDPR), and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc

RECORDS AND MONITORING

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records, or parts thereof, should be shared with other agencies. 'All records relating to individual Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns are held securely with limited access to only the DSL/DDSL and are kept separate from the child/young person's academic file.

- Past concerns for children, and what happened in response to the concerns can be very important information for staff members who may have concerns for the child at a later time.
- Record Retention – Child Protection records must be retained by all educational establishments until the child's 25th Birthday, unless the records are transferred to a new establishment when the child transfers to a new provision.
- Where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred 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 to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead will ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. Receiving schools should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.

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- The originating school should consider whether it needs to retain a copy of the records (for example, if a sibling continues to attend the school). If a copy is retained the reason for this should be recorded.
- All concerns regarding the behaviour or welfare of a child are recorded on CPOMS school system.
- Blank pro-forma are available for staff/visitors to complete around school. Once completed they are given to the safeguarding lead and acted upon. They are stored in a secure locked facility in the DSL's office.
- All child protection concerns are logged and kept securely in the DSL's locked facility, which is updated as new information comes into school.
- CP records are kept separate from other school Records. The Child Protection file is stored securely under lock and key and only the DSL/Deputy has access to them. This is in one central place within school. (DSL office).
- Any teacher-held notes relating to CP are kept within the CP file.
- At Oakwood Academy we hold weekly safeguarding supervision meetings where the DSL, Deputies from all sites and school health team meet to update each other on any new CP referrals, actions and updates on pupils causing concern.
- All staff will be alerted in staff briefings if a child is being monitored for concerns.
- Class teachers will collate initial information on a child; this will be passed along to the DSL/DDSL who brings updates to safeguarding supervision.
- Staff are briefed as to the status of these records in respect of parental access to records as and when required. Reference will be made to our individual school policy which is consistent with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- If a child transfers or leaves the school, the child protection file is transferred securely to the new school. We notify the Local Authority of a 'Child Missing In Education' situation if we cannot ascertain the details of the new school.
- We undertake a case file audit on an annual basis to ensure that recording of safeguarding concerns is effective and that any themes from such concerns are addressed appropriately.

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'Bullying, including cyberbullying, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying incidents are recorded and reviewed and the information is used to inform and enhance the whole school approach to all forms of anti-bullying strategies and responses within the school.'

SCHOOL COMMITMENT

'We recognise that high self-esteem, mental and physical health & wellbeing, confidence, peer support and clear lines of communication with trusted adults helps all children, and especially those at risk of or suffering harm from abuse or neglect.'

Our school will therefore:

- Adopt the **Salford Standards for Listening** and establish/maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to:
<https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/professionals/salford-standards-for-listening-to-families/>
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Establish and maintain an ethos where children are supported with their Emotional and Mental Well Being
- Establish a whole school approach to recognising and responding to potential incidents of child-on-child sexual abuse and harassment; both in and out of school hours. Comprehensive staff training will ensure a school culture that makes it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexualised behaviour, and it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" "part of growing up" or "boys being boys". There will be robust systems of recording incidents that ensure evidence-based review and response. This philosophy will be adopted and promoted by everyone in the school, and inappropriate behaviours will be consistently challenged. We will proactively educate our pupils about relationships, respect and boundaries through the RSHE programme, and all staff will reassure pupils that they will be taken seriously and supported.
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE and Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe and/or communicate their fears or concerns about abuse and are taught about Safeguarding, together with online safety, the risks of cybercrime and cyberbullying (including when they are online at home), stalking and mate

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crime, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. See: [Teaching about relationships, sex and health - GOV.UK](#) .

- Ensure local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are fully understood, and rigorously applied by establishing effective working relationships practitioners from other agencies and with parents and carers
- Ensure that there are systems in place to ensure parents and carers are empowered to participate in decision-making to help to contribute to developments of the school within the community and support and protect children
- Ensure all staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face in daily life. Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve, and change rapidly. The school will consider carrying out an annual review of the approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks the children face.
- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Oakwood Academy recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.
- Oakwood Academy will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our [anti-bullying/behaviour] policy.
- Staff will be aware of the risks of using A.I. tools and will carry out risk assessments for any new A.I. tool being used by the school.

The school will underpin multi-agency working by ensuring all staff

- Collaborate: practitioners working with the same child and family share information to get a complete picture of what life is like for the child.
- Collectively, they ensure the child's voice is at the centre and the right support is provided
- Learn: practitioners learn together by drawing on the best available evidence from their individual fields and sharing their diverse perspectives during regular shared reflection on a child's development, experiences, and outcomes

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- Resource: practitioners build strong relationships across agencies and disciplines to ensure they support and protect the children with whom they work
- Include: practitioners recognise the differences between, and are confident to respond to, circumstances where children experience adversity due to economic and social circumstances and acute family stress, and situations where children face harm due to parental abuse and neglect
- Mutual challenge: practitioners challenge themselves and each other, question each other's assumptions, and seek to resolve differences of opinion in a restorative and respectful way.

All Staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care (EHC) plan)
- is a young carer
- is bereaved
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Where students have experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised
- is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- [Early Help System Guide.pdf](#)

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DESIGNATED CARED FOR CHILDREN LEAD

(Salford have adopted the term Cared for Children. Warrington have adopted the term children in care. Keeping children safe in education 2025 refers to this cohort has Looked After Children)

Governing Bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academy schools must appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training. (refer to the Looked After Children Policy and Procedures for more detail)

The Designated Cared for Children Leads will work in partnership with the Designated Safeguarding Leads, The Mental Health Lead, and the Virtual School Head to ensure the safeguarding vulnerabilities for Cared for Children are appropriately met. In addition, the Virtual School Head receives pupil premium plus additional funding based on the latest published numbers of children looked after in the authority. In maintained schools and academies, the Cared for Children Designated Lead will work with the virtual school head to discuss how that funding can be best used to support the progress of Cared for Children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan.

Non-statutory guidance [on Promoting the education of children with a social worker](#) and children in kinship care arrangements contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of Virtual School Heads.

PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY

All staff will be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. 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 staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead if they have concerns about a child. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

RECOGNISING ABUSE AND TAKING ACTION

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

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- Is disabled
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a [Privately fostered](#) child
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded

All staff will understand Salford's thresholds for [Support and Safeguarding in Salford: Helping children to thrive guidance](#) for Warrington Schools
<https://www.warringtonsafeguardingpartnerships.org.uk/p/i-work-or-volunteer-with-children-and-young-people/continuum-of-need>

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

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

Telephone the Bridge/MASH Partnership and follow this up with a referral to the Bridge/MASH Partnership and/or contact the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.** [Worried about a child•Salford City Council](#) for Warrington schools
[Warrington MARS Form](#)

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

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If a child makes a disclosure to you

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

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement/opinion on it
- Record on CPOMS allocating to the safeguarding team, where appropriate seek out the DSL/DDSL to make them aware of the report. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to The Bridge Partnership and/or the police directly and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process

Bear in mind that some children may:

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

None of this should stop you from exercising [professional curiosity](#) and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

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

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

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

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

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Any teacher who either:

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

must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a **mandatory statutory duty**, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve The Bridge Partnership as appropriate.

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

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

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is **at risk** of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow safeguarding procedures. The Salford FGM Toolkit should be used where a pupil is suspected of being at risk [Female Genital Mutilation | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

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

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

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

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a DDSL or the Director of Safeguarding or a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from The Bridge/Mash Partnership. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

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Make a referral to The Bridge/MASH Partnership, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible.

Early Help Assessment

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

The DSL/DDSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to The Bridge Partnership if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Salford School Partnership

The most effective way to create a support plan with a family is through collaboration with the Salford School Partnership. The Salford School Partnership approach involves a multi-agency partnership discussion, building trust and improving communications across the agencies so that information sharing is effective and appropriate, and the emerging needs identified.

School Coordinators are available for consultations usually with our DSL /DDSL or pastoral staff, they will advise and support our staff on implementing the next steps for Early Help support.

Warrington Safeguarding Partnership

Quality assurance and performance improvement activities are key functions undertaken by all member organisations of Warrington Safeguarding Partnership.

As a multi-agency coordinated partnership we monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by our partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Most importantly, the process of learning allows us to drive forward continuous improvements in practice.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to The Bridge/Mash Partnership or the police, the DSL/DDSL will make the referral.

The Bridge/MASH Partnership will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL /DDSL or person who made the referral must follow up

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with the Bridge if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL/DDSL or the person who made the referral must follow [Salfords Effective Challenge and Escalation procedures](#) or [Warrington Escalation and Professional Challenge](#) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

If you have concerns about extremism

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

Where there is a concern, the DSL/DDSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or The Bridge. [The Prevent Duty](#) works at the pre criminal stage by using early intervention to encourage individuals and communities to challenge extremist and terrorist ideology and behaviour.

The Salford LA Prevent and Cohesion Lead can provide guidance and the DfE has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that these are **not** for use in emergency situations

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

If you have a concern about mental health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood,

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adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and progress at school.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by informing the DSL/DDSL.

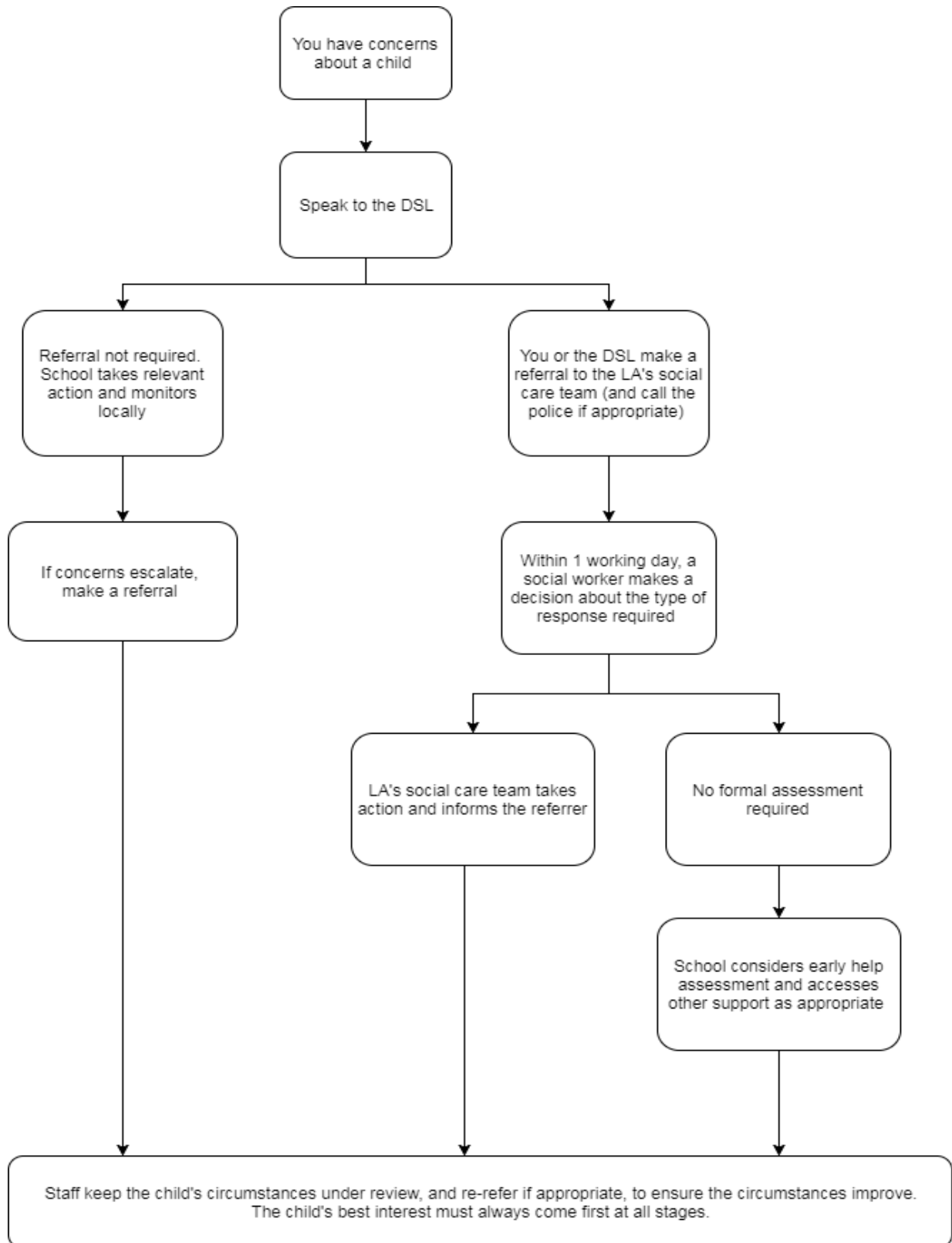
If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

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

(Note – if the DSL/DDSL is unavailable, this should not delay action.)

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

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer, contractor, Chair of Governors), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. This includes low level concerns in line with the allegations against staff (including low-level concerns) policy. **If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.**

The Executive Headteacher/Director of Safeguarding/Chair of Governors will then, if appropriate, refer to the LADO. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the local authority designated officer (LADO). See [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

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

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation. For schools with an Early years setting where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. The School takes a zero-tolerance approach and abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk

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- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

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

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

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL/DDSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL(Salford Schools) will follow the procedures detailed in the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and the **Salford Harmful Sexual Behaviour Pathway**
- The DSL/DDSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)
- The DSL /DDSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL/DDSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys

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- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to report abuse using our reporting systems easily and confidently (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
 - That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
 - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A friend may make a report
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
 - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
 - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
 - The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
 - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

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- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

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

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

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This approach based on [guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety](#) for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers

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- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

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

Initial review meeting

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

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary for the DSL/DDSL only to view the image to safeguard the child or young person. That decision should be based on the professional judgement of the DSL./DDSL (*in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed*)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

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

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEND)
- What the DSL/DDSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent

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- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL/DDSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

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

Further review by the DSL/DDSL

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

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

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

Informing parents/carers

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101, online report

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made, the reasons why the decision/s was made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

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Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of PHSE and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

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

- Putting safeguarding first
- Approaching from the perspective of the child
- Promoting dialogue and understanding
- Empowering and enabling children and young people
- Never frightening or scare-mongering
- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes

Reporting systems for our pupils

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

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- All schools have clear and inclusive pupil friendly safeguarding posters and display boards identifying safeguarding staff.
- Pupils are made aware that there is a pupil voice box clearly identified around school and this is checked regularly by inclusion staff and that pupils have the choice to either share their identity or omit their details out of this report if they feel they are unable to speak to a teacher directly
- Pupils also complete pupil voice questionnaires 3 times a year with a focus on safety and safeguarding

What is abuse and neglect?

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify cases of children who need help or protection. If staff are unsure they must speak to the DSL. All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

There are four main categories of child abuse.

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

Physical abuse

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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 or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

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

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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 can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

Neglect

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Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Provide suitable education

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

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with serious violent crime. Advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. We must always be aware there are also other specific safeguarding issues that put children at risk such as:

- child sexual/criminal exploitation (CSE/CCE)
- bullying including cyber bullying
- domestic abuse
- drugs/alcohol abuse
- Child missing in education
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage

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- gangs and youth violence
- Honour based abuse
- Peer on peer/child on child abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking
- upskirting
- sexual harassment
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Child Abuse Linked to Faith & Beliefs
- Mate Crime
- Stalking

If you have concerns about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children this should be referred to the Head Teacher/Principal. If the concerns are about the Head teacher/Principal, then you should report it to the Chair of Governors/Chair Person of Trust Board.

NB Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 contains links to further Guidance and support.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

SIGNS OF ABUSE

Recognising child abuse is not easy. Sometimes the signs are not obvious and sometimes signs that appear to be indicative of abuse can be due to other causes.

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Therefore, it is very important that you use these signs to help you think about the concerns you have and how you will describe these when making a referral or consulting with the Bridge Partnership team.

These definitions and indicators only serve as a guide to assist you. Remember that children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more is not necessarily proof that abuse is occurring. There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as bereavement, significant changes in family relationships, including the birth of a new baby in the family or problems between parents/carers.

It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. You do, however, have a responsibility and duty to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child. The social worker or police officer will always want to understand your concerns about the child in the context of the child's development and relationships.

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse and to provide the necessary information when reporting your concerns.

Abuse

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

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Most children in daily life will collect cuts and bruises. But each child is different and any perceived injuries should be interpreted in light of:

- the child's medical and social history
- the child's developmental stage
- the explanation given for the injury

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Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and often on the front of the body.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body that are unexplained or not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body especially in clusters and in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games
- Injuries which have not received medical attention or there has been a delay in getting medical attention (although note that burn injuries are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place sometime later)
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Multiple burns

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- fear of further enquiries being made
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather, or to participate in games or swimming
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour

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- running away from home or school

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify, as there may be no outward physical signs.

There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow – but this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents' care.

Children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers.

Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour or presentation which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Negative statements about self
- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders

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- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress
- Reporting parental violence or discord (i.e. exposure to domestic violence)

Sexual Abuse/Violence/Harassment

Sexual abuse is known to take place against children and young people of all ages, including infants and toddlers.

Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child's behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present.

Children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

It is not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- repeated urinary infections
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour or presentation, which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- any allegation by the child of sexual abuse

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- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. dysregulated behaviours or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares and severe or persistent sleep disturbance
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge beyond their age or developmental level; preoccupation with sexual matters
- sexual activity through drawings, language or play
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

This is known as Child-on-Child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require decisions to be made. Preplanning, effective training and effective policies will provide Oakwood Academy with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any allegations.

Decisions are for Oakwood Academy to make on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Oakwood Academy initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be

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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.

all staff are trained to manage a report. In line with our local authority's policy, which dictate exactly how reports should be managed.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should 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. The risk and needs assessment should consider:

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

Risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, Oakwood Academy will actively consider the risks posed to all their pupils and students and will put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

The risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments should be used to inform our approach to supporting and protecting our pupils and students and updating our own risk assessment.

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

What to consider

Oakwood Academy should carefully consider any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a

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complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- 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;
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- The ages 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 or college staff; and
- Other related issues and wider context.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff should act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, Oakwood Academy should follow general safeguarding principles as set out throughout this policy. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator (and any other children involved/impacted).

The starting point regarding any report should always be that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Especially important is not to pass off any sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'having a laugh'

Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care, At this stage, Oakwood Academy will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk.

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise but it has some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

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- constant or frequent hunger, sometimes stealing food
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or constantly underweight
- inappropriate clothing for the conditions.
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Untreated illnesses, injuries or physical complaints

Changes in behaviour or presentation, which can also indicate neglect may include:

- frequent tiredness
- overeating
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

As well as the four main categories of abuse we ask staff to be vigilante for the following:

Domestic Abuse

Recognising the impact of domestic abuse on children as victims in their own right, as per the Domestic Abuse act 2021, a. If they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse The Domestic abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- physical or sexual abuse;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

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OPERATION ENCOMPASS

Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. Police forces not signed up to operation encompass will have their own arrangements in place.

See Appendix 5

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

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

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- SafeLives: young people and domestic abuse.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) AND CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim

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needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

It is important to note that some young people being exploited may show no sign of this abuse, which is why we must be vigilante. For more information and downloadable documents go to Salford Safeguarding Children Board (SSCP) web site: <https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/>

INDICATORS OF CHILD CRIMINAL AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION MAY INCLUDE:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home

- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and

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- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being; and self harm or suffering from changes in emotional well-being;
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.
- suffering from changes in emotional well-being

Relating to CSE

- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

POTENTIAL VULNERABILITIES INCLUDE:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited.

Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;

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- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

SERIOUS VIOLENCE

All staff will be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime including:

- 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
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries

Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff will also be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

MATE CRIME

What is Mate Crime?

Mate crime is the exploitation of a vulnerable person by someone claiming to be their friend. Mate Crime is a specific kind of Hate Crime.

Often the perpetrator will appear to be a 'genuine' friend to both the vulnerable person and any observers of the relationship.

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However, the perpetrator may use abusive or harmful behaviour to maintain or begin their exploitation of the person including:

- Threats of harm
- Saying things to create feelings of worthlessness or dependency
- Actual physical assault or restraint
- Withholding of medication or possessions important to the person
- Covert or overt use of drugs or alcohol

Once 'befriended' examples of exploitation can include (but are not limited to):

- Financial Abuse – stealing money, coercion into spending money or giving away possessions
- Forced labour
- Sexual Abuse – Coercion into prostitution or other sexual exploitation
- Physical Abuse – exert force to control the individual
- Criminal exploitation – Coercion or grooming to commit criminal offences e.g. buying/selling drugs, stealing
- Emotional Abuse – manipulate or mislead the person, make them feel worthless

Who is affected?

Mate crime can affect anyone who is vulnerable. This includes anyone who is either:

- Vulnerable due to their circumstances.
- Vulnerable because they lack the key social skills required to recognise a 'fake' friend.
- Historically those targeted are usually socially isolated or living on their own. This is clearly intentional as it reduces the likelihood that the perpetrator's behaviour will be challenged by others.

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- However, with the increase in social media use, perpetrators are now also targeting vulnerable people online, where they may not be living on their own but living with others or in a family environment.

Indicators of Mate Crime

- Changes in behaviour - becoming more withdrawn or increase in risk taking
- Changes in appearance - taking less or more care of themselves, looking dirty or scruffy, weight loss
- Financial difficulty - bills not paid, unable to buy food
- Changes to household environment - missing possessions, rubbish, unusual items such as cigarettes, alcohol, more noise, house is a mess, parties
- Changes in routine and regular activities
- Withdrawing from existing networks of support, family, friends, activities and services
- Unexplained injuries
- Secretive or increased mobile phone or social media use
- Talking about new 'friends'
- Goods or packages arriving at a person's house (and then being collected by someone else soon after)
- Suddenly changing a will

Ongoing risks of Mate Crime

- The vulnerable person may have been experiencing the exploitation or abuse for a significant amount of time before seeking help.
- The perpetrator is likely to have access to their home or an ability to coerce their way inside.
- The vulnerable person may be dependent on the perpetrator in some way.
- The risk of harm could increase after seeking help as the perpetrator tries to take back control.

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- The perpetrator is unlikely to let the vulnerable adult simply 'walk away' from the relationship.

What does this mean for Schools?

- Mate Crime is an issue for vulnerable children in much the same way as it is for vulnerable adults, although the perpetrators are usually less calculated in their approach.
- It is often mislabeled as 'bullying'. All too often the advice given to vulnerable children is to 'ignore the bully' and the consequences for the 'bully' can be negligible.
- Educating children is a major way that the risk of Mate Crime can be reduced.
 - What makes a good friend
 - How to recognise a 'fake' friend
 - What to do if someone behaves in a way they do not like and how to seek help
- The behavior of the children who perpetrate Mate Crime should also be challenged. They need to understand the impact of Mate Crime and what the consequences are for them should they choose to exploit those who are vulnerable.
- Sometimes the vulnerable adult will know that their 'friend' is not really their 'friend'. However, for some vulnerable adults and also for children, they may not realise that their 'mate' is not really a friend.
- Whilst it is important to talk about concerns, it may take some time for them to understand the concerns others have and accept that their 'friend' is not their friend.

CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM

- 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.

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- The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.
- 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 with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

STALKING

WHAT IS STALKING?

- Stalking is a crime of power and control which can have a devastating impact on victims.
- No definition of stalking within legislation.
- The Police and CPS have adopted the description: a pattern of unwanted, fixated and obsessive behaviour which is intrusive. It can include harassment that amounts to stalking, or stalking that causes fear of violence or serious alarm or distress.
- If the behaviour is persistent and clearly unwanted, causing fear, distress or anxiety then it is stalking.

EXAMPLES OF STALKING BEHAVIOURS

- Following a person
- Contacting, or attempting to contact, a person
- Publishing statements or material about the victim
- Monitoring the victim including online
- Loitering
- Interfering with property
- Watching or spying on a person
- Regularly sending unwanted gifts

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THE STALKING FOUR

Consider the acronym FOUR when determining stalking behaviours. Are they:

- F Fixated**
- O Obsessive**
- U Unwanted**
- R Repeated**

The acronym is used throughout the country to determine whether behaviour is stalking behaviour. It is important to listen to all of the things that are going on. Leaving one gift wouldn't be constituted as stalking but this may be part of a series of other behaviours.

CYBER & DIGITAL STALKING

Cyber and Digital Stalking is the use of the internet, email or other electronic communications to stalk someone. It may occur as part of a wider stalking campaign or may be conducted entirely electronically.

WHAT DOES CYBER STALKING LOOK LIKE?

- Sending unwanted messages via e-mail or social media
- Identity theft
- E-mail / Social Media account hacking
- Using Social Media to monitor an individual
- Using any electrical device to monitor somebody's whereabouts
- Setting up fake profiles/accounts
- Using applications to access somebody's webcam
- Using others to gather information on an individual
- Higher intensity
- Hacking social media accounts
- Using other internet sites to send messages

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- Setting up accounts on Instagram, snap chat posing as the victim
- Setting up 100s of accounts daily to send messages
- Location settings

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Victims want it to stop

- LISTEN BELIEVE AND VALIDATE
- Complete the S-DASH
- Discuss history and previous events
- Encourage the victim to keep a log of incidents and gather evidence
- Advise the victim to protect themselves online
- Support the victim in making a report to the police
- SAFEGUARDING
- Access professional advice & support

Victims should always be encouraged to make a report to the police but if there are Safeguarding concerns DSLs will follow normal Safeguarding Procedures. When reporting should say they want to report being a victim of stalking so that it can be identified straight away.

STALKING SUPPORT SERVICES

- Victims should be encouraged to contact support services for emotional and practical support and for safety planning advice
- National services
 - Suzy Lamplugh <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/>
 - Paladin <https://paladinservice.co.uk/>
 - Alice Ruggles <https://www.alicerugglestrust.org/>
- Local service

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- GM Victim Services <http://www.gmvictims.org.uk/>

KNIFE CRIME

OPERATION SYCAMORE

In the event that a pupil of Oakwood Academy attended school/college carrying a weapon, in particular a knife, Oakwood Academy would refer to Operation Sycamore policy, which would include either a referral being completed and emailed directly to GMP using Gulf@GMP.Police.UK or dial 999 if immediate response is needed.

Oakwood Academy would then follow their policy and procedures and complete a risk assessment for that individual child/pupil or group, this would then be shared with all staff to all were aware of any risks and reviewed on a regular basis in line with the risks posed both to others and to the individual.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION OR ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal/sexual exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called Honour based abuse, or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures. For further information, (see the Children missing from Education policy)

This school monitors attendance carefully and will address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

The school will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. **Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.**

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) the school has:

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly, have appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions) or who are persistently

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absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

- Strategies in place to actively encourage disaffected and disengaged young people to re-engage with education opportunities within the school.
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

ONLINE SAFETY AND THE USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

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

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and

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semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

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

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

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- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety.
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our website [kings academy trust](#)

Artificial intelligence (AI)

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

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

Oakwood Academy will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our anti-bullying/behaviour/artificial intelligence policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by

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the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

COUNTY LINES

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

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

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

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

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

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Professional in all agencies, individuals and groups in relevant communities need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already have suffered from FGM. There are a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to

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practice FGM. The girls involved may not be aware of the practice until it is too late. Sensitivity should always be shown when tackling the subject. Warning signs to watch out for are available on the SSCP or NSPCC website at

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

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

FORCED MARRIAGE

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

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (pages 75-80 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fcdo.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence

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CHILD ABUSE LINKED TO FAITH AND BELIEF

Child abuse linked to faith and beliefs (CALFB) can be linked to

Witchcraft

Spirit Possession

Ritualistic and satanic abuse

Beliefs and abuse include....

- An evil force such as spirit possession, demons or the devil
- “has entered a child and acting through the child is controlling him/her to harm others or leading them astray”(traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs).
- The evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some islamic faiths context) and dakini (in the Hindu context).
- Ritual or mutilation murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies.
- Use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation

Witchcraft

- Witchcraft is known by many terms; black magic, kindoki, ndoki, the evil eye, djinns, voodoo, obeah or child sourcerers. All linked to a genuine belief held by the family or carers (and in some cases, even the children themselves). That a child is able to use an evil force to harm others.
- The label of “witch” is attributed to an individual who is considered to possess “evil power to harm others”
- Accusations of witchcraft or spirit possession in a child have often been linked to negative life events, such as illness and unemployment, with children being held “responsible for events because of spirit possession”

Abuse of children can sometimes be linked to a parent, a caregiver or the wider community’s faith or belief in witchcraft, spirit or demonic possession and other forms of the supernatural. These beliefs can lead to children being blamed for a family’s

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bad fortune and lead to them being subsequently subjected to satanic abuse or practices which are harmful both physically and emotionally to a child.

Children at risk CALFB

- Child abuse linked to faith or belief is not confined to one faith, nationality, ethnic group or community. Cases have been recorded worldwide across various religion including Christians, Muslims and Hindus.
- Not all with the belief go on to harm children. The number of known cases suggest that only a small minority of people who belief in witchcraft or spirit possession go on to abuse children.

Children highlighted to be more at risk of CALFB

- Children with disabilities.
- An albino child
- Children living away from home, in private fostering, not living with their birth parents or parent, due to parental death.
- Children whose parents have been branded as witches.
- Children who are seen as naughty or present with challenging behaviour.
- Left handed children

Warning signs and indicators

- A child's body showing signs or marks, such as bruises or burns, from physical abuse (including historical injuries/scaring)
- A child becoming noticeable confused, withdrawn, disoriented or isolated and appearing alone amongst other children.
- A child personal care deteriorating, for example through a loss of weight, being hungry, turning up to school without food or being unkempt with dirty clothes and even faeces smeared on to them.
- A child's attendance at school or college in school becomes irregular or there is a deterioration in a child's performance.

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- A child is taken out of a school altogether without another school place having been arranged.
- A child reporting that they are or have been accused of being 'evil', and/or that they are having the 'devil beaten out of them'.
- The child or family may use words such as 'kindoki', 'djin', 'juju' or 'voodoo' - all of which refer to spiritual beliefs.
- It may be evident that the child's parent or carer does not have a close bond with the child.
- A child's attendance at school or college becomes irregular or there is a deterioration in a child's performance.
- Wearing unusual jewellery/items or in possession of strange ornaments/scripts

Health Implications

- **Physical:** This can involve beating, burning, cutting, stabbing, semi-strangulating, tying up the child, starving, bath sleeping, being kept away from school, or rubbing chilli peppers or other substances on the child's genitals or eyes.
- **Emotional:** Emotional abuse can occur in the form of isolation. A child may not be allowed near or to share a room with family members, and threatened with abandonment. The child may also be persuaded that they are possessed. The act of telling a child that they are possessed by an evil spirit or told that they are a witch can be emotionally abusive.
- **Neglect:** This can include the child's family and community failing to provide appropriate medical care, poor hygiene, nourishment, clothing or warmth and a lack of supervision, education and a safe environment.
- **Sexual:** Children who have been singled out in this way can be particularly vulnerable to sexual abusers within the family, community or faith organisation. These people exploit the belief as a form of control or threat. Children could also be subject to practices through the deliverance process that can be sexually abusive e.g. having to be bathed undressed in the presence of others. Trafficked children from some countries have been known to be subjected to practices designed to control them. Some of these practices involve using their pubic hair and undergarments in rituals.

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The Justifications

- **Evil Spirits:** Belief in evil spirits that can 'possess' children is often accompanied by a belief that a possessed child can 'infect' others with the condition. This could be through contact with shared food, or simply being in the presence of the child.
- **Scapegoating:** A child could be singled out as the cause of misfortune within the home, such as financial difficulties, divorce, infidelity, illness or death.
- **Physical Difference/Disability:** A child could be singled out for having a physical difference or disability. Documented cases included children with learning disabilities, mental health issues, epilepsy, autism, stammers and deafness.
- **Bad Behaviour:** Sometimes bad or abnormal behaviour is attributed to spiritual forces. Examples include a child being disobedient, rebellious, overly independent, wetting the bed, having nightmares or falling ill.
- **Gifts and uncommon characteristics:** If a child has a particular skill or talent, this can sometimes be rationalised as the result of possession or witchcraft. This can also be the case if the child is from a multiple or difficult pregnancy. Once a child is branded by a faith leader, everyone else in the particular community or congregation believes this is the case.
- **Complex family structure:** Research suggests that a child living with extended family, non biological parents, or foster parents is more at risk. In these situations they are more likely to have been subject to trafficking and made to work in servitude.

Barriers to identification

- Many practitioners are unable to detect faith-based abuse and so the incidents are often recorded under the usual forms of abuse i.e. physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect without ever finding the source of the problem.
- Victims do not report faith-based abuse because they either believe the accusations that are made about them or they fear repercussions if they report the abuse. For example, they could fear that the evil spirit will turn against them or that the community will ostracise them for denouncing a faith leader.

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- The beliefs are entrenched, families trust their faith leaders and truly believe that they are acting in the best interests of the child.
- A child might not know that witchcraft branding is child abuse. They might not know to report it as such, but might mentioned being called “a witch”.
- This must be investigated, and children should be spoken to, so they are able to talk about their experiences without distraction.
- Some cultures believe that what they are doing is for the good of the child and that they are helping rid him/her of demons. They may not understand that what they are doing is abusive and against the law.

Considerations when identifying CALFB

- Has there been a change in the family dynamic or structure?
- Are there comments being made about the child being ‘different’?
- Is the child different from other children in the family or community e.g. disabled, epileptic, suffer an illness?
- What is the relationship between the child and their carer? Are they directly related to the child?
- Is the parent or carer indicating that they are blaming the child for a family misfortune?
- Are they treated differently to the other children in the household?
- Does the child talk about being kept away from the family, isolated by the family i.e. kept in a room, forced to eat alone?
- Has the child or the family spoken about plans to send the child to another country (this may be for ‘deliverance’)?
- Has the child disclosed that they are or have been accused of being ‘evil’, being possessed/possessed by the devil?
- Does the child shy away from other children, believing that he/she may infect others?
- Does the child talk of ‘eating people’ or of ‘changing into an animal’?

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MENTAL HEALTH

All 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.

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.

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

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

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental health and behaviour in schools .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf)

All Staff at Oakwood Academy understand the importance of positive Mental Health and Emotional Well-being. Through the work of the Senior Mental Health Lead, Mental Health Leads and Champions, the school has a co-ordinated approach to both supporting vulnerable pupils and developing a Whole School Approach to mental well-being. The Mental Health Leads work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that if staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken and a referral will be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

PEER ON PEER ABUSE/ CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and other young people. We ensure that our child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer to peer/child on child abuse.

This type of abuse can manifest itself in many ways. Use of mobile phones is closely scrutinised. Sexting is a way that peers can abuse individuals. At Oakwood Academy all phones are handed in to form teachers at the start of the school day and returned to the pupils at home time. All allegations of inappropriate text messaging outside of school are reported to the Police by parents/cares, if this does not happen then school will ensure the police are informed. All pupils are closely monitored by a high

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staff to pupil ratio, even during unstructured times such as lunch, break and toilet times. Our school operates a 'telling' policy so we encourage pupils to tell us if someone has made them uncomfortable. We promote keeping hands to your-self and make staff and pupils aware of who to tell if they are worried about inappropriate behaviour.

Staff should also be aware that as well as the main areas of abuse commonly found there are other ways pupils can be abused.

This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including racial bullying cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- gender-based violence
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation-type violence and rituals.

Abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation-type violence.

This school believes that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

At Oakwood Academy we will support the victims of peer on peer abuse.

TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking (including children) is defined by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as a process that is a combination of movement, control through harm or threat of harm and exploitation. The LA must be notified if children go missing from education. All other concerns to be reported to the DSL.

PRIVATE FOSTERING

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Private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children.

The school or college should then notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

See DfE statutory guidance Children Act 1989 Private fostering for comprehensive guidance on private fostering.

Children and young people who are privately fostered can also sometimes require additional support. For more information about this see

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/private-fostering>

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

Many home educated children have a positive learning experience. However, this is not the case for all, and elective home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school, with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with the LA and other key professionals to, where possible, coordinate a meeting with parents/carers. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child; including where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

At Oakwood Academy where pupils have an Education Health Care Plan and Elective Home Education is requested this needs to be agreed by the Local Authority and the Special Educational Needs team. If a parent/carer wishes to home educate their child, then a written request needs to be sent into school, for the attention of the Head of School. This is then submitted through to the local authority and a multi-agency meeting will be held, with parents/cares. SEN caseworker, a member of EHE team and any other professionals involved. Oakwood Academy would work with both parents/carers, SEN and any other agencies involved to support the young person's needs.

• [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) – DFE statutory guidance.

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UPSKIRTING

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights>

MULTI AGENCY WORKING

Schools have a pivotal role to play in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Governors will ensure that the school contributes to multi agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children.

New safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements are in place in Salford by September 2019. The LA, clinical commissioning group and Chief Officer for Police will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

PROCEDURES – EARLY INTERVENTION

Policies - We follow the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures adopted by SSCP. The procedures provide a framework within which all agencies and professionals can work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people across Greater Manchester.

<http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com>

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

We register for alerts to automatically receive notification when the manual is updated. We also subscribe to receive free Policy Briefings or Practice Guides.

We take account of local supporting pathway guidance and additional policies from Salford Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

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<https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/>

<https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/professionals/policies-and-procedures/>

It is very important that practitioners intervene as early as possible if a child or young person has additional needs and services can help in meeting these needs. All staff will be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. 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 HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local early help process is and how and where to access support.

It is very important that practitioners intervene as early as possible if a child or young person has additional needs and services can help in meeting these needs. All staff will be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help 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. Such action can help prevent problems becoming child protection concerns. The Early Help is a tool for the early help assessment of need [support-and-safeguarding-january-2023.pdf](#) (salford.gov.uk)

For more about the Early Help Service and Assessment go to

[Early Help | Partners in Salford](#)

[safeguarding-formerly-the-thresholds-of-need-and-response/](#)

The Anti-Bullying Policy ensures that we foster a culture of safety throughout the school where children and young people are able to alert us to any incidents of bullying cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and be confident that they will be dealt with effectively. The Anti Bullying Policy also enables us to prevent issues escalating to safeguarding concerns.'

CHILD PROTECTION

Where it is identified that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the child protection procedures set out by the Salford Safeguarding Children Board.

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In implementing the Oakwood Academy School policies and procedures on Safeguarding and Child Protection the following points will be considered:

- The Executive Principal will ensure that the policies relating to safeguarding will be implemented and monitored on an on-going basis with annual evaluation of effectiveness and review and procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly. The Review will be presented as an annual item to the governing body.
- All staff and governors will be kept informed about child protection procedures using a variety of means such as staff meetings, Inset Days, one-to-ones and briefings in various forms.
- All staff will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. All staff and governors will be kept informed about the Contextual Safeguarding approaches the school is deploying to safeguard and protect **all** pupils, and especially the most at risk and vulnerable pupils within the school.
- New and/or temporary staff will be made aware of the policies and procedures at induction within school with clarity about how safeguarding fits into whole school policy.
- The child protection policy;
- The behaviour policy;
- Code of Conduct
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).
- Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping children safe in education 2025

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- All existing staff including those staff who do not have direct pupil contact will be made aware of and have access to copies of Keeping children safe in education 2025 Part 1 and Annex B. as well as any updated school policies and procedures.
- As well as teachers all other staff in school, such as Teaching Assistants, administrators, welfare staff, kitchen staff etc will receive the core training on safeguarding and an induction that is specific to their role including knowing what to do if there are child protection concerns.
- Parents will be informed of the school's duties and responsibilities under the policy and procedures in a range of ways that reflects diverse ability to use methods of communication. Therefore, as well as the use of general methods (a Statement in the School brochure or information pack; website features; one-to-one conversations; use of audio facilities etc) consideration will also be given to the ability of parents to access these. For example, a notice of the availability of the policy could be displayed in the reception area.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

- Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.
- Pupils accessing an Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. written information to be obtained by the school from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.
- Oakwood Academy will always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. They should regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. Reviews should be frequent enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the

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

- No Alternative provider is to be accessed that is not approved by the LA or Ofsted registered.
- All Child protection policies, attendance policies and behaviour policies are to be shared between Oakwood Academy and the alternative provision.
- Staff contact information is to be shared to ensure attendance leads are fully informed of attendance. Non-attendance would be followed up by the Inclusion team and normal attendance protocols to be followed, including home visits if needed.
- When commissioning Alternative Provision schools should have regard of the below statutory guidance:
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67a1ee367da1f1ac64e5fe2c/Arranging_Alternative_Provision_-
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

WHISTLE BLOWING

If staff are concerned about the behaviour of a colleague, they must follow the schools Whistle Blowing policy procedures. They report those concerns immediately to the Executive Principal. If the concern is about the Executive Principal, then the concern should be reported to the Chair of Governors. A concern about the Chair of Governors should be reported to the Secretary of State for Education or if someone is at immediate risk of harm the Police.

THE USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad use of actions. This can range from guiding a child to safety to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or restraint to prevent violence or injury. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary. Staff should always consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 in making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and their Public Sector Equality Duty.

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CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

The Child Protection conference is a meeting to discuss concerns about the care of a child. Its main purpose is to see whether the child is at risk of harm and, if so, to agree what needs to be done to reduce this risk. The Conference can decide to make the child the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

Children are made the subject of a Child Protection Plan when they are thought to be at risk of harm. This might be from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. It helps to keep a check on the work being done with these children.

The Plan contains basic details of the children and their families. It is held securely by Children's Social Care and information from it is only given to authorised people.

The DSL or Deputy will advise school staff on the preparation of reports for child protection conferences, participation in core groups and carrying out specific tasks with the child and family as identified in the child protection plan.

Further advice and support for school staff on participating in child protection meetings is also available from Salford Children's Services Safeguarding Unit on 0161 603 4350 or Warrington Children's safeguarding and social work team 01925 443322

SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

Our school recognises that children who experience harm through abuse, neglect or through experiencing domestic abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world in a positive way.

Our school fosters a culture of safety through the development of an Anti Bullying Policy where children and young people feel confident to report any incidents of bullying including cyberbullying

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and dysregulated. In response there may be steps taken to consider suspension or exclusion from school. Such steps should be taken in the context of considering the needs of the child and school will adopt a safeguarding first approach to addressing behavioural issues ; where appropriate an early help assessment (EHA) should be carried out (with the consent of the parent/carer and/or young person) The Early Help Locality School Coordinators are available for support prior to starting an Early Help Assessment and to clarify if a previous Early Help Assessment has already been completed.

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It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support and that other children are protected from harm.

- This school will endeavour to support pupils through:
- Allocating a key adult to support the young person
- Offer SMART interventions with measurable outcomes
- The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation;
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued;
- The implementation of school behaviour management policies
- A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting;
- Regular liaison with other practitioners and agencies that support the pupils and their families, in-line with appropriate information sharing protocols;
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships (i.e. to work in partnership) with parents/carers whenever possible and so long as it is in the child's best interests to do so;
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

Or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. This policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration

these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children

the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

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communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college.

Oakwood Academy provide extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. Further information can be found in the department's:

- [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#), and
- [Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions](#).

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: [Find your local IAS service \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](#)
- [Mencap](#) - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people
- [NSPCC - Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\)](#) and [NSPCC - Safeguarding child protection/deaf and disabled children and young people](#)

PUPILS WHO ARE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL OR GENDER QUESTIONING

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on gender or sexuality.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DS/DDSL via CPOMS. Support can be provided to young people who are suffering from poor mental health from the
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school mental health lead (Mrs L Campbell and inclusion team. All schools have a designated LGBTQ+ lead (Mrs N Cass) to offer bespoke support to young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+)

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, neuro developmental needs such as autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

TRADITIONAL BRITISH VALUES

We are committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

MODERN SLAVERY AND THE NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM

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

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims>

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PREVENTING RADICALISATION

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

There is a current threat from terrorism in the UK and this can include the exploitation of vulnerable young people, aiming to involve them in terrorism or to be active in supporting terrorism. All staff need to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being radicalised and drawn into terrorism and extremism, including INCEL, Anti-Semitism and Right Wing Extremism. To achieve this, we will draw upon The Prevent Duty Guidance, DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024"; and specifically Home Office Resources "Learning Together to be Safe", "Prevent: Resources Guide", "Tackling Extremism in the UK", EFT 'Prevent for FE and Training and DfE's "Teaching Approaches that help Build Resilience to Extremism among Young People" and "Education Against Hate" on-line resources

When operating this policy, we will use the following accepted Government definition of extremism which is:

EXTREMISM

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; and/or calls for the death of members in our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

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

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-definition-of-extremism-2024>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-extremism-strategy>.

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RADICALISATION

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revise-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>.

TERRORISM

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

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents>

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

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

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

THE PREVENT DUTY

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

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The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations.

CHANNEL

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Guidance on Channel is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

Staff will have training that gives them knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideologies. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent but non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists can exploit.

All staff seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including but not restricted to those linked to Islam ideology, Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology/Incel/Anti-Semitism etc. Concerns should be referred to the Designated Child Protection Person who has local contact details for Prevent and Channel referrals. They will also consider whether circumstances require the police to be contacted.

<https://safeguardingchildren.salford.gov.uk/professionals/multi-agency-training/sscp-training-programme/> provides further information. The Department for Education has launched a helpline for anyone concerned about a **child who may be at risk of extremism**, or about extremism within an organisation working with children and young people. Email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk. Telephone: 020 7340 7264.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Oakwood Academy as part of the whole school approach to safeguarding, governing bodies and proprietors create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in their school. Organisations who work with or on behalf of children, young people and other vulnerable client groups need to be vigilant in their recruitment and selection of staff. Abusers may target these organisations and can be extremely skilled at presenting themselves as caring and trustworthy individuals. Some

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indicators of abusive behaviour can emerge through inappropriate attitudes or inconsistent reactions and a vigorous recruitment and selection process provides important opportunities to identify these and deter and prevent offenders from gaining access to children, young people and vulnerable adults through their work.

This policy has been prepared to provide information and support to all recruiting managers within schools who recruit new employees and outlines the key requirements expected in relation to the safe recruitment and selection of people. It is expected that the same principles will also be applied when engaging volunteers, contractors or via agencies. All those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children will have received appropriate safer recruitment training, the substance of which at a minimum will cover the content of part three of Keeping Children Safe in education 2025.

Safe recruitment is a key priority for Kings Academy Trust to ensure our staff, pupils, clients, customers and service users are not subject to any risk whether it is through their day-to-day duties and responsibilities or access to the services we are depended upon to provide. The guidance has been designed to help ensure safe and effective recruitment and selection decisions are made in line with best practice, regulatory and legal guidance.

The purpose of the document and overall approach to recruitment is to encourage the continuous improvement of safer recruitment practices within Kings Academy trust to help deter, identify and reject unsuitable individuals and to safeguard all who access our services. Safe recruitment is not solely for those individuals who work with vulnerable people i.e. adults, children and young people but ensures best practice in recruitment across the Trust

Safe Recruitment in Kings Academy Trust

Kings Academy Trust, have a corporate social responsibility to account for the safety and protection of every individual it deals with as an employer, as a service provider and as a corporate parent. We therefore need to be confident that our recruitment practices embed this culture of safety and protection throughout the Council and schools.

For those individuals who will work and/or come into contact with children and young people, the recruitment practice requires managers to meet existing regulatory and legal requirements.

Whilst there are specific mandatory regulatory and legal requirements for children, young people and vulnerable adults, safe recruitment should not be considered to be

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exclusive to these service groups or staff. Implementing mandatory best practice across the Council and schools to engage safe recruitment practices and processes will encourage the continuous improvement in practice that will help to deter, identify and reject people who are unsuitable to work for Kings Academy Trust. The full policy can be read here <https://www.kingsacademytrust.org/documents/policies/safer-recruitment-policy.pdf>

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

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

Organisations or Individuals using school premises

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

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Oakwood Academy has three building sites. All of these have trained safeguarding staff to the same level as the Designated safeguarding lead. All safeguarding concerns are reported via CPOMS to Designated safeguarding lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads. The DSL & DDSL then oversee all actions that need to take place and follow through with any referrals to relevant services. All safeguarding incidents reported from all sites are discussed with the safeguarding team weekly at Safeguarding Supervision.

Kings Multi Academy Trust support

As part of Kings Academy Multi Academy trust, central executive team, we work with a wide variety of stakeholders. This includes senior staff and being deployed into a variety of other settings to offer school to school support. These staff are employed by Kings Academy Trust. It is essential that these staff recognise the importance in helping to safeguard vulnerable young people and follow due process.

Dual reporting

Senior staff and Directors should follow the safeguarding policy and procedures. If they have a safeguarding concern about a child or a member of staff within the school they are deployed at. However, if these staff have a safeguarding concern when visiting another setting we have a **dual reporting system**. The DSL/DDSL in the off-site school needs to be told of the concern immediately, BUT the DSL/DDSL back at Oakwood Academy needs to be notified immediately as well.

It is then the responsibility of the DSL/DDSL at Oakwood Academy to check that action has been taken. This gives them the opportunity to whistle blow if they feel the school has failed to take the necessary action. The DSL/DDSL at Oakwood Academy will give the relevant staff feedback that their concern has been acted upon. This whole process is recorded and filed in a secure place in the DSL's locked facility so we can evidence we are holding other schools to account and is kept confidential.

APPENDIX 1:

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Salford's Support and Safeguarding (formerly the 'thresholds of need and response')

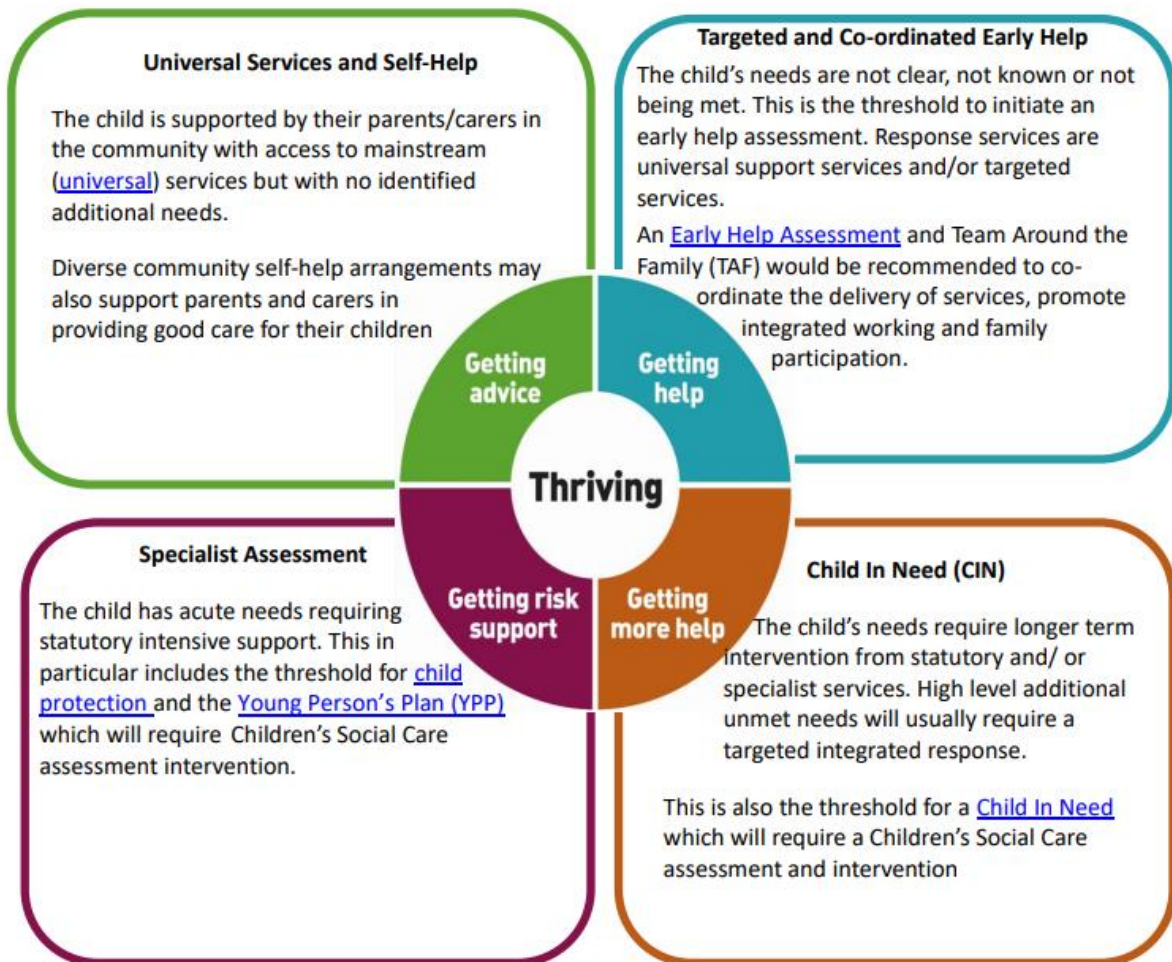
[support-and-safeguarding-january-2023.pdf \(salford.gov.uk\)](#) guidance is for anyone who has concerns about a child. It is designed to be used as a foundation to enable the correct level of support to be provided, whilst embedding strengths-based, community approaches into practice.

It is important that this guidance is understood by DSLs and DDSLs to ensure children get the right support at the right time. It introduces a model of help and support, providing information on the levels of need and gives examples of some of the indicators that mean a child or young person may need additional support.

There are four types of support which families are entitled to ensure they meet their children's needs and help them to thrive. Practitioners will reflect on each stage with the family whenever possible but recognise there may be times this is not safe to do so. Examples of this are serious safeguarding concerns that require immediate intervention, where staff are unsure the Bridge/MASH Team will be contacted for consultation. 0161 603 4500/01925 443 322

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APPENDIX 2:

School Child Protection Procedures

Staff/Volunteers If They Have Concerns About A Child or Young Person in School should report it immediately.

Practitioners in schools who are concerned about a child's welfare or who believe that a child is or may be at risk of harm from abuse or neglect should pass any information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL or Deputy DSL in school; this should *always* occur as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours (see Flowchart at Appendix 3): The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Executive Headteacher/Head of School and there is numerous Deputy DSLs across all sites.

It is these senior colleagues who are responsible for taking action where the welfare or safety of children or young people is concerned. If staff are uncertain about whether their concerns are indeed 'child protection' then a discussion with their Designated Person/line manager will assist in determining the most appropriate next course of action. The multi-agency Bridge Partnership/Mash team can also be consulted, where you will be able to speak to a qualified social worker if necessary for support and advice.

Staff should never:

- Do nothing/assume that another agency or practitioner will act or is acting.
- Attempt to resolve the matter themselves alone.

What should the DSL consider right at the outset?

- Am I dealing with 'risk' or 'need'? (By definition, a child at risk is also a child in need. However, what is the *priority / level and immediacy* of risk / need?)
- Can the level of need identified be met:

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- In or by the school or by accessing universal services
 - By undertaking an early help assessment (EHA) without referral to the Bridge Partnership
 - By working with the child, parents and colleagues?
 - Communication with school co-ordinator
 - Does a referral to the Salford Schools Partnership need to be made to help Identify risk/need signposting for support
- What resources are available to the practitioner and the school and what are their limitations, to be determined through SSP if needed
 - Is the level of need such that a referral needs to be made to the Bridge Partnership which requests that an assessment of need be undertaken? (Section 17 Child in Need referral)
 - Is the level and/or likelihood of risk such that a child protection referral needs to be made (i.e. a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm? (Section 47 Child Protection referral)
 - What information is available re: Child, Parents, Family & Environment?
 - What information is inaccessible and, potentially, how significant might this be? For example, has the parent/carer denied that there is a problem and failed to co-operate with the school in resolving the issue?
 - Who do I/don't I need to speak to now and what do they need to know?
 - Where can I access appropriate advice and/or support?
 - If I am not going to refer, then what action am I going to take? (e.g. time-limited monitoring plan, discussion with parents or other practitioners, recording etc)

Feedback to Staff Who Report Concerns to the DSL.

Rules of confidentiality mean that it may not always be possible or appropriate for the DSL to feedback to staff who report concerns to them. Such information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only and the DSL will decide which information needs to be shared, when and with whom. The primary purpose of confidentiality in this context is to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

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Thresholds for Referral to the safeguarding Partnership

There are four types of support which families are entitled to ensure they meet their children's needs and help them to thrive. Practitioners will reflect on each stage with the family whenever possible but recognise there may be times this is not safe to do so. Examples of this are serious safeguarding concerns that require immediate intervention. Where unsure the Bridge will be contacted for consultation. 0161 603 4500

Universal Services and Self-Help

The child is supported by their parents/carers in the community with access to mainstream (universal) services but with no identified additional needs. Diverse community self-help arrangements may also support parents and carers in providing good care for their children.

Targeted and Co-ordinated Early Help

The child's needs are not clear, not known or not being met. This is the threshold to initiate an early help assessment. Response services are universal support services and/or targeted services. An Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Family (TAF) would be recommended to coordinate the delivery of services, promote integrated working and family participation.

Child In Need (CIN)

The child's needs require longer term intervention from statutory and/or specialist services. High level additional unmet needs will usually require a targeted integrated response. This is also the threshold for a Child In Need which will require a Children's Social Care assessment and intervention.

Specialist Assessment

The child has acute needs requiring statutory intensive support. This in particular includes the threshold for **child protection** and the Young Person's Plan (YPP) which will require Children's Social Care assessment intervention.

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Is this a Child In Need?

Under Section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989, a child is a Child in Need if:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority.
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or
- He/she is disabled.

Is this a Child Protection Matter?

Under section 47(1) of the Children Act 1989, a local authority has a duty to make enquiries where they are informed that a child who lives or is found in their area:

- is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order;
- is in Police Protection; or where they have
- reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Therefore, it is the 'significant harm' threshold' that justifies statutory intervention into family life. A practitioner making a child protection referral under s.47 must therefore provide information which clearly outlines that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make judgements around 'significant harm', levels of 'need' and when to refer. As part of the referral process, when children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, as much information as possible will be provided so all the evidence is available to enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

Making Referrals to CSC

via the online Salford City Council's portal and information hub for services to

Children, Young people, and families at

<https://childrensportalehm.salford.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

All referrals and requests for support concerning the welfare or safety of a child must go through the Bridge Partnership via the online portal.

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Via the online Warrington local authority portal

[Warrington Children's Portal](#)

- When making a referral the DSL will identify if they are referring a:
 - Child Protection Matter
 - Child Needing Support
- Child Protection referrals will be for a child(ren) at risk of significant harm. Consent will be gained where it is appropriate. The school/DSL/DDSL will advise what measures are in place to increase the child(ren)'s safety ahead of The Bridge Partnership contacting the family.
- Child(ren) requiring support consent will be gained in advance of making the referral.
- **Child Protection**– make a referral if you are concerned a child is at risk. If you have concerns that a child is at immediate risk of harm, you should call 999. When is a child at risk of harm? Some children may be suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm and need protection and care because of neglect, sexual, physical, or emotional abuse. There are other areas of concern that could leave a child in acute need such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour Based Violence, radicalisation, domestic abuse, modern slavery, gang involvement, criminal activity (e.g., county lines) and/or sexual exploitation.
- Where there is not a safeguarding concern, a **Child Needing Support** referral will be made: where a child may be in need, or needs Early Help.
- **A child can be in need** if: They are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority, their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired without the provision for him/her of such services, they are disabled.
- Questions that are considered when completing the referral form,
 - What has prompted the referral?
 - What are the identified needs?
 - What are the positives for the family?
 - What are the concerns for the child/family?

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- What the school has done to ensure the safety of the child before making this referral?
- Every referral into the Bridge Partnership is screened by Bridge social workers or Bridge Early help screeners to determine the level of support to be provided so referrals will be evidence based, contain; what life is like for that child at home, what is likely to happen without intervention and for targeted Early Help and for Children In Need, parental consent will be obtained.
- Referrals will also contain the voice of the child regarding:
 - What is their lived experience?
 - What is it they want to happen?

Child Needing Support

- Where an Early Help Assessment already exists, the DSL will send this with the referral to the Bridge Partnership along with any Team around the Family minutes.
- This is a request for assessment/support/services and, as such, consent of the parent(s) (and child/young person will be obtained where appropriate).
- Where a parent/carer/young person refuses to consent, the school will make clear their ongoing plans and responsibilities in respect of support, monitoring etc, and the possibility of a child protection referral at some point in future if things deteriorate or do not improve. (This is about openness and transparency in dealings with parents).

Child Protection Matter

- A telephone call will be made to the Bridge Partnership and the referral form submitted straight after the conversation.
- If an Early Help Assessment exists this will be forwarded to the Bridge Partnership as soon as possible, and certainly within 48 hours along with any Team around the Family minutes.
- **Consent** of a parent or child/young person **is not required** to make a child protection referral
- A parent will, **under most circumstances, be informed** that a child protection referral is to be made. **The criteria for not informing parents are:**

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- Because this would increase the risk of significant harm to a child(ren); or
- Because, in the referrer's professional opinion, to do so might impede an investigation that may need to be undertaken;
- Because there would be an undue delay caused by seeking consent which would not serve the child's best interests.

Fear of jeopardising a working relationship with parents because of a need to refer is **not** sufficient justification for not making a referral nor for not telling them that you need to refer. Lack of openness will do little to foster ongoing trust, particularly as the source of referrals will be disclosed to parents except in a limited number of circumstances. If you feel that your own or another adult's immediate safety would be placed at risk by informing parents, then you should seek advice and/or make this clear on the Early Help Assessment and in any telephone contact with the Bridge Partnership.

Partnership Responses to Referrals and Timescales

In response to a referral, the Partnership may decide to:

- Provide advice to the referrer and/or child/family;
- Refer on to another agency who can provide services;
- Convene a Strategy Meeting ;
- Provide support services under Section 17;
- Undertake an social work assessment (completed within 45 working days);
- Convene an Initial Child Protection Conference (within 15 working days of a Strategy Meeting)
- Accommodate the child under Section 20 (with parental consent);
- Make an application to court for an Order;
- Take no further action.

FEEDBACK FROM THE SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership has 24 hours within which to make a decision about a course of action in response to a referral. A DSL/DDSL should expect to receive written

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confirmation about action following any referral within 7 days. If you do not receive any (same day) verbal feedback following an urgent child protection referral, and where this places school/a child or children in a vulnerable position, you should ask to speak to a Duty Social Worker, or the relevant Team Manager.

RISK ASSESSMENT 'CHECKLIST'

- Does/could the suspected harm meet the Working Together 2023 definitions of abuse?
- Are there cultural, linguistic or disability issues?
- Am I wrongly attributing something to SEND need?
- Does the chronology indicate any possible patterns which could/do impact upon the level of risk?
- Are any injuries or incidents acute, cumulative, episodic?
- Did any injuries result from spontaneous action, neglect, or intent?
- Explanations consistent with injuries/behaviour?
- Severity and duration of any harm?
- Effects upon the child's health/development?
- Immediate/longer term effects?
- Likelihood of recurrence?
- Use of Thriving Families Tool to assess neglect
- Child's reaction?
- Child's perception of the harm?
- Child's needs wishes and feelings?
- Parent's/carer's attitudes/response to concerns?
- Are there any barriers to parental/carer engagement?
- How willing are they to cooperate?
- What does the child mean to the family?

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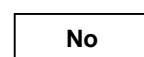
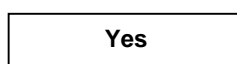
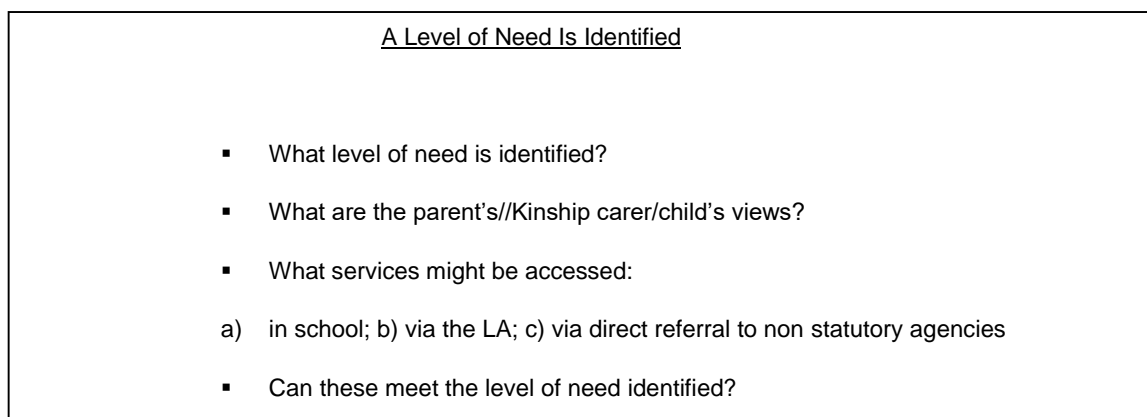
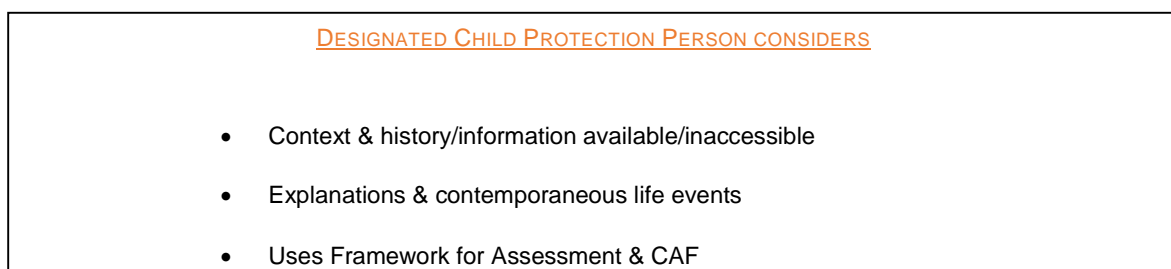
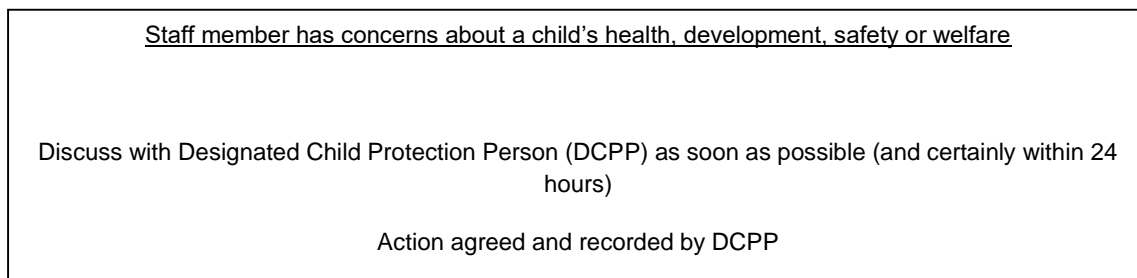
- What role does the child play?
- Possible effects of intervention?
- Protective factors and strengths of/for child(I.e. resilience/vulnerability)
- Familial strengths and weaknesses?
- When and how is the child at risk?
- How imminent is any likely risk?
- How grave are the possible consequences?
- How safe is this child?
- What is the safety plan?
- What are the risk assessment options?
- What are the risk management options?
- What is the interim plan?

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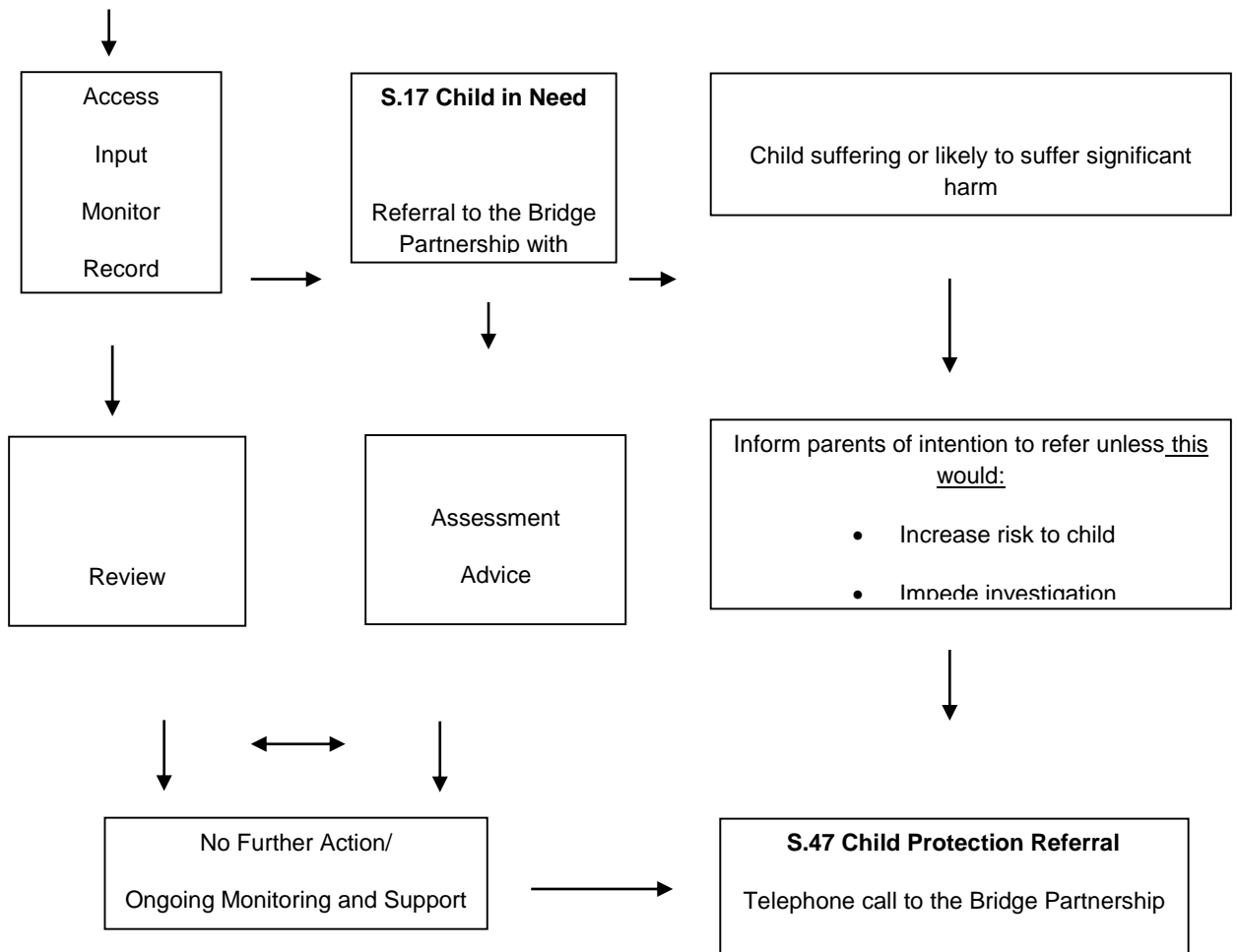
APPENDIX 3:

TAKING ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE/PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL



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APPENDIX 4:

RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

If a child wants to confide in you, you *SHOULD*

- Be accessible and receptive;
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace;
- Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure children that they are right to tell;
- Tell the child that you must pass this information on;
- Make sure that the child is ok;
- Make a careful record of what was said

You should *NEVER*

- Investigate or seek to prove or disprove possible abuse;
- Make promises about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets' to children;
- Assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- Jump to conclusions, be dismissive or react with shock, anger, horror etc;
- Speculate or accuse anybody;
- Investigate, suggest or probe for information;
- Confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- Offer opinions about what is being said or the persons allegedly involved;
- Forget to record what you have been told;
- Fail to pass this information on to the correct person (the Designated Child Protection Person).
- Involve those who do not need to be involved. Only those such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care need to be involved.

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Children with communication difficulties, or who use alternative / augmentative communication systems

Practitioners should be aware that children may find it difficult to always speak about what they need, what is happening to them or what has happened to them. This might include SEND children, unaccompanied children, refugees, children who are victims of modern slavery and/or trafficking and those who do not speak English or for whom English is not their first language.

- While extra care may be needed to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are interpreted correctly, any suspicions should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children;
- Opinion and interpretation will be crucial (be prepared to be asked about the basis for it and to possibly have its validity questioned if the matter goes to court).
- Use of signers or interpreters

Recordings should

- State who was present, time, date and place;
- Be passed to the DSL/DDSL immediately (certainly within 24 hours);
- Use the child's words wherever possible;
- Be factual/state exactly what was said;
- Differentiate clearly between fact, opinion, interpretation, observation and/or allegation.

What information do you need to obtain?

- Schools have **no investigative role** in child protection (Police and the Bridge Partnership will investigate possible abuse very thoroughly and in great detail, they will gather evidence and test hypotheses – leave this to them!);
- Never prompt or probe for information, your job is to listen, record and pass on;
- Ideally, you should be clear about what is being said in terms of **who, what, where and when**;

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- The question which you should be able to answer at the end of the listening process is 'might this be a child protection matter?'
- If the answer is yes, or if you're not sure, record and pass on immediately to the DSL/DDSL or consult directly with the Bridge Partnership.

If you do need to ask questions, what is and isn't OK?

- **Never** ask closed questions i.e. ones which children can answer yes or no to e.g. Did he touch you?
- **Never** make suggestions about who, how or where someone is alleged to have touched, hit etc e.g. top or bottom, front or back?
- If we must, use only '**minimal prompts**' such as 'go on ... tell me more about that ... tell me everything that you remember about that '
- Timescales are very important: '**When was the last time this happened?**' is an important question.

In relation to disclosure we ensure:

- There a place in school which is particularly suitable for listening to children e.g. not too isolated, easily supervised, quiet etc. The SMART room and Counselling room is available at all times of the school day.
- We ask staff to think carefully about their own body language – how we present will dictate how comfortable a child feels in telling us about something which may be extremely frightening, difficult and personal;
- We are prepared to answer the 'what happens next' question;
- We never make face-value judgements or assumptions about individual children. For example, we 'know that [child.....] tells lies';
- We think about how we might react if a child DID approach us in school. We will be prepared to offer a child in this position exactly what they need in terms of protection, reassurance, calmness and objectivity;
- Staff need to think about what support **they** could access if faced with this kind of situation in school.

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CONNECTING POLICIES FOR SAFEGUARDING PURPOSE

If you are worried about a child or young person (in relation to issues listed below) or have any concerns or questions regarding Child Protection refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, in their absence the Deputy DSL.

LIST OF SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

child missing from education: child missing from home care: child sexual exploitation (CSE) : bullying including cyber bullying : domestic violence : drugs : fabricated or induced illness : faith abuse : female genital mutilation (FGM) : forced marriage : gangs with youth violence : gender based violence against women and girls (VAWG) : mental health : private fostering : preventing radicalisation : sexting : teenage relationship abuse : trafficking.

From DfE, Keeping children safe in education: September 2024: *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.*

Oakwood Academy believes it is very important that all the Safeguarding Policies are read in conjunction with one another to quickly identify and take any necessary and appropriate action to help prevent children and young people up to 18 years of age being at risk of harm.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

[NSPCC.org.uk:](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

www.tes.com/for-schools/safeguarding-training

www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

SAFEGUARDING CONNECTING POLICIES (situated on the Oakwood Academy website)

Attendance

Behaviour & Anti Bullying Policy

Care/Intimate Care/Administration of Medication /Touch

Complaints

Data Protection

Drugs

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e-safety (online)

FGM

First Aid

Health & Safety

ICT and Computing

RSE

Pupil Friendly Safeguarding

Safer Recruitment

SMSC

Visits/Trips

Whistleblowing

The Safeguarding Policies are up-dated annually or as necessary depending on new statutory guidance or legislation.

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APPENDIX 5:

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs L Southwood and Mr Darren Jones

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs L Campbell

Key Adult/Deputy Key Adult (if different to Deputy DSL)

Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps

police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The

system ensures that when police are called to an incident in which a child or young person has been involved in or been exposed to an incident of domestic violence or abuse. the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school prior to 9.00 am before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable silent or overt support to be given to the child according to their needs.

AIMS

Operation Encompass does not replace or supersede existing safeguarding processes or protocols, rather it seeks to support these operationally. The Protocol will be followed in conjunction with Salford's Safeguarding Children Board/Salford Safeguarding Partnership.

By sharing information under the Encompass model, children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse will have access to responsive support after a domestic abuse incident. The school will receive information when:

- Police have been called out to a domestic abuse incident
- The child is present in the household at the time of the incident
- The child is of school age

Sharing this information in a timely manner via Operation Encompass enables the provision of immediate early intervention through silent or overt support, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

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SILENT SUPPORT EXAMPLES	OVERT SUPPORT EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible application of school rules for example uniform, homework etc. • Understanding and flexibility in expectations in terms of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour - School Work • Opportunities for one-to-one time with teacher to provide opportunities to talk for example 'helping with a job' • Review lesson plans to ensure appropriateness for the child on the day • Systems for spare uniform, lunch etc. • Child knowing who they can talk to • Checking collection arrangements at the end of the school day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using tools to understand child experiences, for example 3 Houses. More resources are available here. https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/safeguarding-children/advice-for-professionals/early-help-assessment-and-taf/voice-of-the-child/ • Talking to parents • Use the Early Help Assessment process to access additional support • Develop safety planning with the child • 'Healthy Relationships' class sessions (EG Real Loves Rocks) • Consult with the School Coordinator • Refer to salford schools partnership, with parental consent

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS - INFORMATION SHARING AND STORAGE

Section 11(2) of the Children Act, 2004 requires Local Authorities and the Police to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children. This enactment provides conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 by which personal and sensitive personal data may be lawfully shared.

Personal data sharing must be proportionate, necessary but not excessive, and must be balanced with the consideration of privacy rights under the Human Rights Act. It

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must take into account any duty of confidentiality owed. A public interest in disclosure must outweigh an individual's right to privacy.

The basis on which sharing of information of this type may be justified by police is section 11(2) Children Act 2004 which requires that policing bodies (together with a number of other specified public bodies) discharge their functions having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This duty however, will be considered in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the right to private and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

This protocol has been developed taking into account the duty to safeguard children and the requirements of the most recent Information Sharing – Advice for providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018

It is recognised that the handling of such confidential and sensitive information needs to be dealt with in a way that is proportionate and appropriate to the needs of the child or young person. To address this, the school has identified a Key Adult and a deputy to handle the confidential and sensitive information.

The Encompass information is stored in accordance with the requirements for the storage of safeguarding/child protection files. Where a child already has such a record, Encompass information will be included within the record.

The Key Adult will be the person available each day to receive the details of the incident and assess the type of support needed for the child.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

POLICE

Police officers will attend a domestic incident, manage the immediate risks, and complete the Domestic Abuse Stalking Harassment (DASH) risk assessment at the scene of the incident. The DASH risk assessment will not be shared with the school, rather a short summary will be provided by the police with respect to the child or young person and will include: -

- The name, age, date of birth, home address and school attended of the child.

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- The time/ date/location of the incident and details of those involved in the incident, their relationship to the child and the child's involvement in the incident.
- An overview of what happened during the incident and the outcome.

This information will be disseminated via email to the school by the officer attending the incident, prior to retiring from duty. The officer will then place a line on the DAB (Domestic Abuse) record within IOPS (Integrated Operating Police Operating System) acknowledging that the information has been sent.

Incidents occurring on Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday will be reported to the school during these times and will be available on the next working morning for the Key Adult.

Notifications to the Key Adult will continue to be made during the school holiday periods, however, it is recognised that an immediate response cannot be made. This information will be used to understand any significant issues for the child on their return to school.

A disclosure will be made in respect of all children aged between 4 and 17 years who are in full-time education. Police will maintain a record of the log number, and the school to whom it has been disseminated and the date of dissemination.

SCHOOLS' RESPONSIBILITY

The School will identify the Key Adult and Deputy responsible for the OE information in the school. (This role is best placed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy as both have received training in child safeguarding).

The Key Adult will have undertaken the Online Key Adult Training prior to accessing the schools Operation Encompass inbox. [Online Key Adult Training: Operation Encompass](#)

The school's Key Adult or Deputy will check the notifications each morning.

The Headteacher and Key Adult will ensure that there is a sufficiently trained deputy to receive the information in the Key Adult's absence.

The School's Encompass mailbox will be checked every morning and reviewed as needed, as notifications of incidents can be made at any time, dependent on when a domestic abuse incident occurs.

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The school will record the information received from the police using the same processes used to store child protection records within the school. The school will also record the outcomes and impact of any actions taken or put in place.

The school is aware that in the event of any domestic homicide or serious case review the documents may be required for disclosure purposes.

CHILD ABSENCE FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

Where a notification is made and a child is not in school, the school will consider the following:

- The school will review the information within the police notification in the context of what is already known about the child, giving consideration to any safety or welfare concerns that have been recorded prior to receiving the police information.
- The school's key adult will call home and follow up as per attendance protocols. Consideration should be given to undertake a home visit, with another member of staff.
- Where the /Key Adult in the school cannot contact the parents or carer, and have not received notification why the child is absent, the next steps will be considered and actions may include: -
 - **Home Visit** – After undertaking a risk assessment, the school may consider, at the discretion of the Head Teacher/DSL, carrying out a home visit to see the child. Subsequently, if concerns or risks to the child's safety are identified during the home visit, referrals to Children's Social Care and the Police may need to be made.
 - **Referral to Children's Social Care** - Dependent upon the circumstances of the incident and the parental response to contact, the Key Adult (following discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead where required) will make a referral to the Bridge.

When the child returns back to school, the key adult will revisit the offer of parent/child support.

Supporting Children who are or have experienced Domestic Abuse

Harbour offers a range of support to young people in Salford aged 5-18 focussed on healthy relationships supporting children and young people who have witnessed or are experiencing domestic abuse and young people who are showing signs of harmful behaviours in their own relationships. They offer a safe space to explore this without judgement to help them form positive relationships

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For more information and to make a referral [Access the domestic abuse toolkit | Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Working with Parents

The school is signed up to the protocol to raise parents' awareness of Encompass. (See Appendix letter to parents and carers)

Many victims who experience domestic abuse want to tell someone about their experiences and are looking for help. Being involved with Encompass may mean that more parents who are experiencing domestic abuse are likely to contact the Key Adult as a source of support. The majority of support to parents will take the form of a listening ear and signposting to local Domestic Abuse services. There may be occasions however, when the information received by the Key Adult requires immediate direct action; either because the risk to the parent and child is immediate and high, or because the parent is asking for help to leave the violence.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm to the parent and/or the child the police will be contacted, and **in an emergency, this will always be 999.**

Where a parent is seeking help and support to flee abuse or to take other measures to protect themselves, contact can be made with Safe in Salford, Victim Support or Women's Aid using the following details:

<https://www.salfordfoundation.org.uk/sisprofessionals/>

Women's Aid; [Home - Women's Aid \(womensaid.org.uk\)](https://www.womensaid.org.uk)

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

If there is uncertainty around a referral to Safe in Salford, Victim Support/Women's Aid, contact should be made with the Bridge Partnership 0161 603 4500

Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Encompass

MARAC is a victim-focused meeting where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic abuse between criminal justice, health, children's services, education, housing practitioners, IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) as well as other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. The aim of MARAC is to share information, understand the level of risk to the individual and

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relevant others (including children) and develop a risk management plan. MARAC meets every week in Salford.

There may be occasions where parents of children notified to schools via the Encompass process have been referred to MARAC. Where the school identifies that they may have additional and relevant information to share with MARAC, the school will contact the Bridge Partnership.

Will the Police refer to Bridge Partnership every time they attend a DA callout where a child is present?

Police agreed referral criteria with Bridge Partnership;

A referral to Children's Services needs to be actioned by the attending Officer in respect of Domestic Abuse incidents (recorded as a DAB on IOPS - Integrated Operating Police Operating System) when:

A crime has been submitted & a child was present at/normally resides at the address

OR This incident is the 3rd reported incident in last 12 months

OR It is a child caller to Police/Emergency Services

OR When either the victim or perpetrator is known to be pregnant

OR When there is a child abuse marker (CA) on the address

OR The incident involves a perpetrator subject to licence or Community Order

OR If previous incidents were referred to the Bridge Partnership - even if the Police Officer did not consider that any of the above criteria were met.

The remaining DV incidents are DV incidents where no crime is alleged, i.e. verbal argument only and the other listed criteria are not realised. Therefore, once Encompass has become live, Police will only be sending a notification through Encompass and not to the Bridge Partnership social care.

Operation Encompass will notify schools of all incidents and therefore schools will be able to build up a picture of the context a child is living in.

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Encompass Parents Awareness Letter (template)

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Operation Encompass

The school has been given the opportunity to take part in a project that will run jointly between schools and Greater Manchester Police.

Operation Encompass has been designed to provide early reporting to schools, i.e. prior to 9 .00 a.m. on the next school day, of any domestic abuse incidents that occur outside of school, but which might have an impact on a child attending school the following day. During the school term this information will be shared on school days. When incidents occur on a Friday, Saturday or a Sunday, the police will contact the relevant school the following Monday.

A nominated member of school staff, known as a Key Adult, will be trained to liaise with the police. At Oakwood Academy our Key Adult is Mrs Leanne Campbell They will be able to use information that has been shared with them, in confidence, to ensure that the school is able to support children and their families. Information will be shared where it is identified that a child or young person was present, witnessed or was involved in a domestic abuse incident.

We always endeavour to offer the best support possible to our pupils and believe that Operation Encompass is going to be beneficial and supportive for all concerned; children and families

Some information about Encompass is included in this letter but if you would like more information about this initiative, details can be viewed online at

Oakwood Academy

Thank you for your continued support

Head Teacher

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Operation Encompass Police Log Sheet

Police Reference Number (FWIN - Force Wide Incident Number)		Date	
Child's name and age & DOB			
Date and time of incident Address			
Circumstances of incident:			
Additional school information including other Encompass contacts:			
Actions taken and Impact:			

ADDITIONAL ADVICE & SUPPORT

[Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#) (updated January 2024)

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Trafficking: Safeguarding Children has been revised back to the original title of the document: [Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked](#)

Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children has been revised back to the original title of the document: [Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery](#)

The Drug Strategy 2021 has been replaced with [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives](#) (April 2022)

Information and advice about drugs has been retitled Honest information about drugs but still leads to the [Talk to Frank](#) website

The [Lets talk about it](#) link on preventing radicalisation and extremism has been removed

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation's excellent new self-help site for teenagers worried about sexual behaviour, [shorespace.org.uk](#), has been added

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