



# **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**

**Approved by:**

**Safeguarding Governor's Board**

**Last reviewed on:**

**December 2024**

**Next review due by:**

**December 2025**

## RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

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When Was the Plan last Updated?		
Date	Name	Detail (changes made)
November 2024	Emma Thomson	Key personnel updated. Reference documents dates updated Additional responsibilities added for DSL Definition of radicalisation updated Updated signs for spotting FGM

### Bents Green Values

We nurture relationships: We care about everyone in our school community. Unconditional positive regard is central to our approach to students, staff and the whole school community.

We are kind and respectful: We will treat each other with respect and kindness, and we are considerate of each other's feelings.

We celebrate individualism: Every individual is valued for who they are and what they contribute to the school. We are a school that encourages people to embrace their true selves and share their uniqueness with the world.

We communicate positively: We ensure that we focus on developing positive communication with students, staff and the whole school community.

We are lifelong learners: We believe that everyone can achieve and learn in the right environment and with the right support.

We use these values to underpin all our work, and all staff and visitors are expected to model these at all times.

**1. Key personnel within the school who have lead responsibilities relating to Safeguarding policy and procedure and are part of the Safeguarding Team:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Staff Member and contact</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Co Head teacher</b>	<b>Aileen Hosty ext 1268</b>	Responsible for implementing policies and procedures, allocating resources to the safeguarding team and addressing staff safeguarding concerns.
<b>Co Head teacher</b>	<b>Laura Rzepinski ext 1412</b>	Responsible for implementing policies and procedures, allocating resources to the safeguarding team and addressing staff safeguarding concerns.
<b>Designated Safeguarding Leads</b>	<b>Cathy Varley ext 1895 Emma Thomson ext 1258</b>	Senior member of staff responsible for dealing with safeguarding issues, providing advice and support to other staff, liaising with the local authority and other agencies
<b>Designated Safeguarding Deputies Ringinglow Site</b>	<b>Helen Tate ext 1248 Elena Drayson ext 1269</b>	The DSD supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead and works with the DSL or acts in their absence, but does not take overall lead responsibility.
<b>Designated Safeguarding Deputies Gleadless Site</b>	<b>Charlie Iantorno ext 1410 Adrian Symonds ext 1433 Alicia Jowett-Jones ext 1433</b>	The DSD supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead and works with the DSL or acts in their absence, but does not take overall lead responsibility.
<b>Designated Safeguarding Deputy Westfield Hub</b>	<b>Alex Walker 0114 2479374</b>	The DSD supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead and works with the DSL or acts in their absence, but does not take overall lead responsibility.
<b>Designated Safeguarding Deputy Post 16 Enterprise Works</b>	<b>Nicola Worth – Post 16 01709 257277 (option 8)</b>	The DSD supports the Designated Safeguarding Lead and works with the DSL or acts in their absence, but does not take overall lead responsibility.
<b>Learning Mentor with responsibility for Attendance</b>	<b>Brittany Milnes - Gleadless Hollie Lanty - Ringinglow</b>	Responsible for leading on attendance and APS and monitoring persistent absentees
<b>Online Safety Lead</b>	<b>Cathy Varley</b>	Develops and maintains an online safety culture within the school.
<b>Designated Teacher for CLA</b>	<b>Adrian Symonds</b>	Promotes the educational achievement of children who are 'looked after'.
<b>Designated Teacher for CLA</b>	<b>Vivien Annabel</b>	Promotes the educational achievement of children who are 'looked after'.
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	<b>Laura Gillespie</b>	Reviews the safeguarding policies and procedures and remedies any deficiencies or weakness in regard to child protection arrangements
<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Natalie Brownell</b>	Reviews the safeguarding policies and procedures and remedies any deficiencies or weakness in regard to child protection arrangements

**This policy statement was revised in December 2023  
and will be reviewed during the Summer term of each year  
by the Senior Management Team of the school, in consultation with staff, and the Governing Body.**

## 2.Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding at Bents Green School includes all aspects of promoting safe, happy and healthy lifestyles for all of our students and their families. This policy is used on all sites within the school. This is done through the provision of an appropriate personalised curriculum, safe, nurturing environment and the investment into building positive relationships. Some students and families need additional support to enable this and will need further personalised input from tutor teams and / or the safeguarding and Intervention team within school, in liaison with other professionals as needed.

We recognise that young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Through training and regular safeguarding briefings staff are made aware that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just the young person's SEN or disability. Staff at Bents Green School have a thorough understanding and awareness that young people with SEND have a higher risk of peer group isolation and they work closely with parents/carers and other early help agencies to attempt to create appropriate social opportunities. Some students at Bents Green School have significant communication difficulties, strategies including visual resources are put in place to help pupils communicate their wishes, feelings and views.

Safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure that all concerns about students' welfare are effectively considered by the school's safeguarding team, and appropriate action taken to ensure students and their families are supported to the best of our ability, through effective collaborative working between home, school and other agencies.

Where a student is considered to be at significant risk of harm this becomes a **Child Protection** issue (still part of safeguarding). In the event of a Child Protection issue, our safeguarding procedures will be initiated (in line with Safeguarding Sheffield Children policies) and may involve other agencies, if appropriate to ensure our students are safe from harm.

Our Safeguarding policy includes awareness of and adherence to the Prevent Duty. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies have attended the compulsory WRAP training. All staff in school have been made aware of the [Prevent Duty](#) and receive training updates throughout the academic year.

Our Safeguarding policy incorporates training and advice relating to the following areas as found on the Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Partnership website: Mental Health, Domestic Abuse and

Forced Marriages, Drug and Alcohol Misuse, Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation, Sexualised Behaviour, Abuse and Exploitation, Disability and Health issues, Online Safeguarding, Community and Peer issues, Parenting and Carer issues.

*Bents Green School adopts the Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership Policies which can be found on the [school website](#) and on the ['Safeguarding Sheffield Children's' website](#).*

### 3.Rationale and aims

#### Safeguarding in Education is Everybody's Business

The school policy aims:

- To establish a safe environment in which students can learn and develop.
- To establish clear parameters within which all adults working in the school are expected to operate, when dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues.
- To ensure that we practice safe recruitment by checking the suitability of prospective staff and volunteers to work with our students
- To support individuals in making sound judgements and taking appropriate actions, which are legal, consistent with the aims and values of the school and **in the best interests of each young person.**
- To raise awareness of child protection issues and provide support and protection to students, adult workers, and the school as an organisation.
- To ensure that young people are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to keep themselves safe and healthy.
- To promote an ethos where students feel safe to talk, in which different viewpoints can be shared and extreme beliefs / behaviours sensitively challenged.
- To provide information to others about the school's responsibilities, policies, procedures and practice.
- To act as a point of reference for the continuing development of good professional practice.
- To work collaboratively with families and wider agencies to support the needs of all young people within the school
- 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
- To ensure that all Staff are properly training in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

## 4. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [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 Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including 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
- [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

The policy applies to:

- **All adults** employed on contract at the school, whether permanent or temporary.
- **Other adults, who work at the school on a regular basis;** this includes professionals from other agencies (e.g. Educational Psychologists, Area Health, Speech Therapy ...) and volunteer workers.

The policy is to be considered alongside other, closely related school policies, which include:

- Behaviour Policy and Reward Strategy
- Policy Statement and Staff Guidelines on The Positive Handling Policy
- Online Safety policy and Acceptable User Policies
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Safeguarding response to students who go missing from Education
- Attendance policy

#### **All Schools and Education Establishments are required by law to follow the Statutory Guidance**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE Sept 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE DEC 2023
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, DfE 2015
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services, DfE July 2018
- SSCB Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures Manual
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 and childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 updated August 2018
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Children Missing from Education, Sept 2016
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings – May 2019 –
- Child Protection and Online Protection Agency-  
[www.ceop.org.uk](http://www.ceop.org.uk) [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

To meet these duties we will follow the policies and procedures as set out by the Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Partnership.

### **5.Roles and Responsibilities**

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. 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 (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
  - Healthy and respectful relationships
  - Boundaries and consent

- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

### **5.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead & Safeguarding Team Responsibilities:**

The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Our DSL's are Cathy Varley and Emma Thomson. 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.

#### **The DSL will:**

- 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
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, 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
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school
- Ensure that a safeguarding report is completed annually for governors and for the Safeguarding Sheffield Children's partnership
- Implement, monitor and evaluate the Safeguarding policy and practice across school
- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the names of the designated [safeguarding staff](#) in school
- Develop open, honest relationships with parents/carers and families, encouraging joined working to best support the needs of individuals
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the school Safeguarding Team.
- Ensure that all staff understand the systems for reporting safeguarding and child protection concerns to the school Safeguarding Team
- Promptly notify social care if a student who is subject to a child protection plan leaves the school.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences and child in need meetings.



- Keep written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions, 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
- Ensure that all safeguarding information about a student is transferred securely to the new setting when a student leaves the school.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the government guidance as listed above and the Safeguarding Sheffield Children's partnership policies adopted by Bents Green School and that these are available on the school MLE and in staff workrooms.
- Ensure that current issues, updates and findings of serious case reviews are passed on to staff as needed so that staff can make appropriate changes to their practices and curriculum.
- Ensure that the school's Safeguarding Team meets at least weekly to review any reports of concerns which have been raised. Incidents requiring instant attention will be discussed and dealt with as a matter of urgency on the day that they are raised.
- Attend training provided by Safeguarding Sheffield Children's partnership and provide feedback to safeguarding colleagues and the wider staff team as appropriate.
- Undertake relevant online training courses to support the safeguarding roles, responsibilities and current issues in school.
- Provide guidance and procedural information to staff during safeguarding refresher trainings, weekly briefings and otherwise as needed.
- Ensure that information is shared promptly with appropriate agencies ensuring that the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping young people safe.
- Monitor and respond to CPOMS concerns daily
- Ensure that students who are absent from school for 3 days with no contact from parents/carers are subject to a safe and well visit from School staff. Any student with a social worker who is absent from school with no contact the social worker will be informed on day 1 of absence with no contact.
- Provide half termly training to staff using staff quizzes to determine gaps in knowledge and focussing on contextual and relevant safeguarding issues and any updates to legislation

**The DSL will also:**

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers 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

## 5.2 All Staff Responsibilities:

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
- 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
- Attend and undertake safeguarding training as directed by the CPD programme
- Pass on all concerns to safeguarding staff in line with the school systems and record promptly as advised.
- Establish frequent, honest and open relationships with parents/carers
- Provide a safe learning environment where students feel supported and listened to.
- Provide an atmosphere in which students can talk about sensitive issues, discuss different viewpoints and challenge extreme beliefs / behaviours
- Provide a positive and preventative curriculum which teaches students to make good choices about healthy and safe lifestyles and who to ask for help if they encounter difficult situations
- Ensure all bullying issues are dealt with appropriately with in class and by informing the Senior Leadership Team.
- Ensure students are taught how to keep themselves safe on and off-line through a carefully planned and responsive curriculum and that they know who to turn to for help if they are worried.
- All staff may contact social care directly if they feel concerned that appropriate action has not been taken to keep a student safe.
- Report safeguarding concerns to the safeguarding team in a timely manner and record the details on CPOMS

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, the online safety policy which 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 (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- 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 and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

### 5.3 The Governing Board

The governing board will:

- 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 link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is a different person from the DSL
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, 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:
  - 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

Make sure:

- 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). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
- 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 (see appendix 3).
- All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

#### **5.4 The Headteacher**

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

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which 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
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- Ensuring that online safety training is included in staff safeguarding and child protection training

#### **5.5 Administrative Staff**

- Ensure all visitors to school are asked to read key safeguarding information
- Ensure safeguarding information around school is up to date
- Ensure safeguarding information on the [school website](#) is kept up to date
- Ensure all visitors to school follow sign in procedures and that appropriate DBS and identity checks are made.
- Ensure visitors who have appropriate checks in place are given a green lanyard.
- Ensure visitors who have not had appropriate checks in school are given a red lanyard and that they are assigned to a member of staff who will be responsible for ensuring that they are fully supervised whilst in school,
- Send out information to parents / carers as requested by the Safeguarding Team
- Pass on all concerns received about students to the Safeguarding Team
- Ensure the Safeguarding Team are made aware about absences linked to identify students.
- Follow all safeguarding protocols in school if they have a concern about a student
- Attend safeguarding training and read any information provided.

- Liaise with external agencies as needed to set up meetings / phone calls for members of the Safeguarding Team
- Provide admin support for the Safeguarding Team as needed.
- [Read Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024 part 1 and Annex B](#)

## 6. Multi-Agency Working

The school contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The school is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements. It will also ensure all staff undertake their duties following an LA referral and ensure a child centred approach to safeguarding; as set out under the children Act 1989. The school will be fully engaged, involved, and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Once the school is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. The school will act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements. The school will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to protect the welfare of its students, through the early help process and by contributing to multi-agency plans to provide additional support. The school also recognises the particular importance of inter-agency working in identifying and preventing CSE.

## 7. Information Sharing

The school recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet students' needs and identify any need for early help. Considering the above, staff will be aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes – data protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the student being placed at risk of harm. Staff members will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of students. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information, they will speak to the DSL or deputy DSLs.

Bents Green school's approach to confidentiality and data protection this can be found in the Data Protection Policy

[Data Protection Policy Review Nov 2023.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

## 8. Recognising Signs of Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

In relation to children, safeguarding and promoting their welfare 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 health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

For the purposes of this policy, "abuse" is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others – this can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse including where they see, hear or experience its effects'. Children may be abused,

neglected or exploited in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse and exploitation can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

There are four types of child abuse as defined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education':

### **8.1 Physical Abuse**

Is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Most children will collect cuts and bruises and injuries, and these should always be interpreted in the context of the child's medical / social history, developmental stage

and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental. Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given; these can often be visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.
- Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:
- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home.

### **8.2 Emotional Abuse**

Is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of

another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve

seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, including cyberbullying, causing the child to frequently 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, but it may also occur alone. Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify as there are often no outward physical signs. Indications may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, however, 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 which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

### **8.3 Sexual Abuse**

Is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or nonpenetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

It is recognised that there is underreporting of sexual abuse within the family. All staff and volunteers should play a crucial role in identifying / reporting any concerns that they may have through, for example, the observation and play of younger children and understanding the indicators of behaviour in older children which may be underlining of such abuse.

All staff and volunteers should be aware that adults, who may be men, women or other children, who use children to meet their own sexual, needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages.

Indications of sexual abuse may be physical or from the child's behaviour. In all cases, 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.

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
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy
- Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- 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 allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

#### **8.4 Neglect**

Is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. All staff will be aware that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSLs, 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; this includes being aware that students can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a student being identified as at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure.

It can be difficult to recognise neglect, however its effects can be long term and damaging for children. Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Being constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Losing weight, or being constantly underweight.
- Inappropriate or dirty clothing.

Neglect may be indicated by changes in behaviour which may include:

- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.
- Not having many friends.
- Complaining of being tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.

## **9. Specific Safeguarding Issues**

There are specific issues that have become critical issues in safeguarding. The school will endeavour to ensure their staff, governors and volunteers are familiar with these issues, namely but not exhaustively:

- Radicalisation (Prevent Duty)
- Bullying including cyber bullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and as defined by Working Together 2023
- Children at risk of criminal exploitation (CRE) as defined by local safeguarding partnership procedures
- Domestic Violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- Gangs and Youth Violence
- Child on Child abuse

- Gender based violence/Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental Health
- Private Fostering
- Preventing Radicalisation
- On line abuse/Sexting
- Teenage Relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Missing children and vulnerable adults
- Child sexual abuse within the family
- Poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child on child abuse. The school will incorporate the signs of abuse and specific safeguarding issues on safeguarding into briefings, staff induction training, and ongoing development training for all staff and anyone who has contact with a child or young person including governors, supply teachers and volunteers. We will also access government guidance, local procedures, strategies and tools through the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership.

All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSL(s), need to 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; this includes being aware that students can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). 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. All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

Bullying and forms of bullying on- and off-line including prejudice based and cyber bullying is also abusive and will include at least one or more, of the defined categories of abuse above. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

### **9.1 Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty**

Extremism refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Radicalisation refers to 'the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence'. Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties. The school will actively assess the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff who identify pupils who may be susceptible to radicalisation should act appropriately and contact the school's DSL. The school will work with

local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate. Any Prevent referral will be made in line with Government guidelines.

The school will ensure all staff including governors and volunteers need to be aware of extremism, including the signs of it, alerts to concerning behaviours, and ideologies considered to be extreme. They need to have an understanding of the British Values agenda and adhere to their duties in the Prevent guidance 2015 to prevent radicalisation.

The Headteacher will:

- Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism;
- Ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with issues arising through delivery of regular training and updates
- Communicate the importance of the duty
- Provide appropriate and sufficient training on the Prevent duty
- Ensure all staff (including governors and volunteers) implement the duty.

The school will ensure that they engage with parents and families, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. In doing so, the school will assist and advise family members who raise concerns and provide information for support mechanisms.

Any concerns over radicalisation will be discussed with the pupil's parents, unless the school has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result

## **The Prevent Duty**

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism", known as "the Prevent duty". The Prevent duty will form part of the school's wider safeguarding obligations.

All schools will respond to any concern about Prevent as a safeguarding concern and will report in line with the school's safeguarding reporting procedures. This may include a referral into Channel using the case pathway process. They will seek to work in partnership, undertaking risk assessments where appropriate and proportionate to risk, building our children's resilience to radicalisation. They will use the relevant forms to record any concerns, keeping records which will be treated as a Child Protection Record, storing them as appropriate.

The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect pupils against the risk of radicalisation. The DSL will hold formal training sessions with all members of staff to ensure they are aware of the risk indicators and their duties regarding preventing radicalisation.

## **9.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE) (including Modern Slavery)**

CSE is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- May involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants

- and/or for the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator through violence or the threat of violence

The school recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the pupil's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. The school will recognise that CSE can affect any pupil who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes pupils aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. The school will also recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

School staff will be aware of the key indicators that a pupil is the victim of CSE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education'.
- Having older partners.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infection
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Becoming pregnant.
- Engagement in offending
- Disengagement from education
- Overly secretive
- Repeat concerns about sexual health
- Decline in emotional wellbeing
- Unexplained Absence from school
- Association in gangs
- Unexplained injuries
- Carrying weapons, access to or carrying unusual number of mobile
- Phones

All suspected or actual cases of CSE/CRE/modern slavery are a safeguarding concern in which child protection procedures will be followed; this will include a referral to the police and social services. If any staff are concerned about a student, they should refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s within the school.

### **9.3 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Serious Violence and County Lines**

Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. This can include those involved in serious violent crime.

They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

For the purposes of this policy, “child criminal exploitation” is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

## **9.4 County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of ‘deal line’.

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Signs which may indicate criminal exploitation:

- go missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from their own
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones or unexplained injuries
- Excessive receipt of texts /phone calls
- Relationships with controlling /older individuals or groups or changes in relationships
- Leaving home / care without explanation
- Suspicion of physical assault /unexplained injuries
- Parental concerns
- Carrying weapons
- Significant decline in school results / performance
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being

**More specific indicators that a student may be involved in county lines include:**

- Having been the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime, as well as the victim
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owing a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Criminal exploitation of children is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the DSL who will seek advice from agencies and professionals. This will mean a referral into the Police and Social Care. Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, county lines activity will immediately report all concerns to the DSL. The DSL will consider referral to the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis and consider involving local services and providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

## **10. Online safety and the use of mobile technology and filtering and Monitoring**

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, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **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 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 are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training 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
- 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, Bents Green School uses Smoothwall filtering and monitoring System
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our **online safety policy and Acceptable user policy**, which you can find on our website:

<https://www.bentsgreenschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=135&type=pdf>

## 11. Child on child abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. 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.

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

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

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
- 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)



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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

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

### **11.1 Reporting Procedures**

All staff are made aware through regular training that child-on-child abuse IS abuse & should never be tolerated. Staff challenge all inappropriate behaviours and do not downplay behaviours as ‘banter’, ‘having a laugh’, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the schools safeguarding procedures.

Staff will report the abuse to the safeguarding team on the same day

The safeguarding team will assess each case and either manage the behaviour internally by following the school behaviour policy and supporting students with interventions personalised to their behaviour

Or

Refer to early help agencies to address nonviolent harmful sexual behaviour

Or

Escalate to children’s social care if a victim has been harmed, is at risk of harm. Or is in immediate danger and if a young perpetrator is considered to be at continuing risk of significant harm

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



if a victim reports an incident, staff will make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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

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

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

### **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
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse
- 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
- 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

### **11.2 Child on child abuse Risk assessment & safety planning**

This is the responsibility of the DSL, fulfilling the organisation's 'duty of care' to all people using the setting. The purpose is to decide whether to re/admit a pupil with concerning behaviour & plan for the safety of the alleged/abuser, their alleged/victim, and others at the setting.

Our School Risk assessment identifies the impact of:

- Alleged/abuser & victim being educated at the setting & around other people
- Of using strategies to minimise identified risks, help staff to respond clearly & reduce risks to a manageable level

Bents Green School follows the education settings 'Information Sharing' policy in Education policies, procedures & guidance, Safeguarding Sheffield Children website) to ensure sensitive & appropriate communication with other agencies.

All agencies should agree how to communicate with the alleged/victim, alleged/abuser, parents/carers, staff & pupils, whilst ensuring that this does not prejudice any investigation and maintains individual confidentiality.

#### **Risk assessments are:**

- Recorded and included on the child's safeguarding file (CPOMS)
- Regularly reviewed e.g. through TAF or other meetings, and updated with any changes

#### **Risk assessments consider information from all agencies about:**

- What the concerning behaviour is
- When & why the alleged/abuser may have behaved this way e.g. warning signs & triggers
- Any cultural context for the behaviour
- Related issues e.g. child exploitation, disability, abuse & neglect, substance/alcohol misuse
- Any language & interpretation needs of the alleged abuser/victim & their families to ensure full understanding of the safeguarding issues
- Age & understanding of alleged/abuser/victim
- Previous education experiences of the alleged/abuser (e.g. relationships, attainment)

- Views of parents/carers/family, their response, anxieties, level of cooperation/compliance
- Alleged/abusers' cooperation, responsibility taken, understanding of allegations & victim's viewpoint
- Impact of social media
- Positive and negative friendship groups inside & the setting and in the community
- Mapping others at risk at the setting e.g. people related to concerns e.g. alleged/victim's siblings
- Alleged/abusers' capacity to change, resilience, goals, attitudes, opportunities, engagement, participation
- Therapeutic support & other assessments from agencies & whether outcome has been positive
- Training needed to develop staff safeguarding & other skills e.g. behavioural understanding, disability, SEN, Team Teach

### **11.3 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')**

#### **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 (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
- 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.

#### **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 to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services

- Any relevant facts about the 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 will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- 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 SEN)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL 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, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

#### **Further review by the DSL**

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

They will hold interviews with the 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 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 Sheffield safeguarding hub or reporting online

#### **Recording incidents**

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded.

#### **Curriculum coverage**

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our RSE Curriculum. 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

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

#### **11.4. Sexual violence, sexual abuse and sexual harassment**

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Schools and colleges should be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school.

For the purposes of this policy, "consent" is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. Such behaviour would constitute to harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). The age of consent is 16.

Sexual violence refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences

Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- **Sexual harassment** refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a student's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:
  - Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
  - Sexual "jokes" and taunting.
  - Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone,
  - Interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.

- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Sharing unwanted explicit content.
- Upskirting.
- Sexualised online bullying.
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
- Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

For the purposes of this policy, “upskirting” refers to the act, as identified the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person’s clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person’s genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including students and staff, of any gender can be a victim of upskirting.

For the purposes of this policy, the “consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos”, colloquially known as “sexting”, is defined as the sharing between students of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. For the purposes of this policy, “indecent imagery” is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving a child
- Someone hurting a child sexually
- Sexual activity that involves animals

The school curriculum will ensure that students of all ages are taught about and understand the concept of consent and its importance in an age-appropriate way.

### **11.5 Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)**

All staff receive regular training focusing on recognizing and responding to Harmful Sexual Behavior (HSB). Staff are trained in delivering interventions to support students who display problematic and or harmful sexual behavior. Staff are knowledgeable in all sexualized behavior requires an action.

Children and young people typically display a range of sexualised behaviours as they grow up. However some may display problematic or abusive sexualised behaviour. This is harmful to the children who display it as well as the people it's directed towards.

Everyone who works or volunteers with children should be able to distinguish developmentally typical sexual behaviour from sexual behaviours that are problematic or harmful. This helps to respond appropriately and provide children and young people with the right protection and support.

All staff will be aware of and know how to use the Hackett sexualised behaviour continuum to recognise and respond to the different stages / levels of sexualised behaviour.

Bents Green School work closely with specialist intervention workers from HSB panel who meet monthly to offer advice and support to school staff.

### **11.6. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and ‘Honour-Based’ Abuse (HBA)**

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and

practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

"Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons." (World Health Organisation, 2016) FGM has been an embedded practice for centuries in some countries in the world including Africa, the Middle East, Iran, Iraq, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan (DH, 2015). The World Health Organisation estimated that between 100 to 140 million women and girls worldwide have undergone FGM, but prevalence of FGM in the UK is difficult to estimate because of the hidden nature of the crime. All suspected or actual cases of FGM are a safeguarding concern and safeguarding procedures will be followed. This will include a referral to the police. If any staff are concerned about a student, they will refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s within the School before reporting the concern directly to the Police.

It is a mandatory reporting duty for all teachers/staff to directly report to the police

where it is believed an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 in the UK.

Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.

There are four types of FGM, mainly carried out on girls between the ages of five and ten. In some countries it is practised on babies as young as two or three days old and in other areas, it is practised prior to marriage or as part of the wedding rituals. It is the parent's decision as to whether their daughters are 'cut', but they face tremendous pressure from older members of their families, especially, if they return to their country of origin. In most countries, including the UK, FGM is illegal.

Signs may include:

- Being repeatedly absent from school or absent for a prolonged period
- Not participating in Physical Education
- Unauthorised and or extended leave, vague explanations or plans for removal of a female in a high risk category (parents from a country who are known to practice FGM) especially over the summer period
- Plans to take a holiday which may be unauthorised, unexplained or extended in a country known to practice FGM
- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)



- FGM being known to be practised in the girl’s community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record)
- and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/antimalarial medication

FGM is included in the definition of so-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA)’, which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. It is a form of abuse directed towards a child or vulnerable adult, including adults who are forced into marriage against their free will. 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. It is an offence to do anything intended to cause a child to marry before the child’s eighteenth birthday, whether or not the conduct amounts to violence, threats, or any other form of coercion or deception. This applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages. Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the ‘one chance’ rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a student is being forced into marriage, they should speak to the student about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL. The DSL will: speak to the student about the concerns in a secure and private place, activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority’s designated officer, seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fmufco.gov.uk](mailto:fmufco.gov.uk)

## **12. Reporting concerns and taking action**

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue. Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean “the DSL (or deputy DSL)”. Staff will be aware that students 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. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL, or deputy DSL, if they have a concern about a student. All staff members must be aware of the procedure for reporting



concerns and understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and information sharing, as outlined in the communication and confidentiality section of this policy.

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

A referral should be made to the DSL if anyone believes a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. The DSL should immediately inform children's social care and/or the police. In emergency situations, if the DSL or Headteacher is not immediately available then **anyone can make a referral by calling the Police or Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (0114 2374855).**

If an emergency referral is made by an individual they must ensure the DSL is informed as soon as possible. Follow the Sheffield procedure for making a referral. Further information on how to report abuse is available here:

#### **Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (0114 2374855).**

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

The local authority will decide within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded. If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

### **12.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you**

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

- Listen to and believe them. All disclosures and reports must be taken seriously.
- Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (staff must personally report to police where they discover that an act of FGM has been carried out), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

### **12.3 If you have concerns about a child**

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):

- Follow Sheffield procedure for referring your safeguarding concerns.
- Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.
- If the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a deputy DSL, or member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care.

You can also :

- seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL (or deputy) as soon as practically possible.
- Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.
- Log any incidents on CPOMS as soon as possible and include factual information in the log

### **Early help assessment**

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

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

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

## **12.4 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.

**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 children's social care 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 local 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 should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

<https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/scsp/safeguarding-information-and-resources/referring-a-safeguarding-concern-to-childrens-social-care>

## 12.5 If you have concerns about extremism

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

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

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

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

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

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

## 13. Allegations against staff including low level concerns

Bents Green School have a separate policy for allegations against staff that may meet the harm threshold and low level concerns. This can be found in the staff code of conduct:

[Code of Conduct Review Nov 2024.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Headteacher immediately.

Staff will have met the **harm threshold** if they have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child (or young person)
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved/may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The Headteacher will then follow the procedures and process checklist set out in Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Allegations & concerns about staff & volunteers in education settings.

- Allegations should be responded to quickly, fairly and consistently, protecting the child or young person whilst supporting the person subject to the allegation.

- The LADO and case manager should systematically record the allegations detailing all decisions and actions.
- Procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.
- Staff should refer to the Allegations & concerns about staff and volunteers process checklist which can be found in the above Sheffield policy.

If the concerns/allegations are about the Headteacher, individuals must report this directly to the Chief Executive Officer

- If the concerns/allegations are about the Chief Executive Officer, individuals must report this directly to the Chair of the Trust Board

### **Concerns that do not meet the ‘harm threshold’**

Low-level concerns about adult behaviour are those that do not meet the ‘harm threshold’ above but are not insignificant. They often cause a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’. e.g., behaviour that is:

- Inconsistent with staff code of conduct, including outside work
- Over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children/young people on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating students

Such behaviour can appear inadvertent, thoughtless, or inappropriate, or intend to enable abuse. Concerns may arise from a:

- Suspicion or complaint
- Disclosure made by any child, parent, or other adult
- Result of vetting checks

The school will ensure the staff codes of conduct; behaviour policy and safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively, and that appropriate action is taken to deal with any concern

### **Sharing Concerns:**

- If staff find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted, or they have behaved in a way that falls below professional standards they should self-refer.
- If there is a concern about a member of staff which may meet the harm threshold, the School procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff should be followed and reported to the Headteacher
- If the concerns relate to the Headteacher, this should be reported to the chair of Governors
- If the concern does not meet the harm threshold, the school Low Level Concerns policy should be followed and concerns reported to the Headteacher
- The School Whistleblowing Policy may be referred to where there are concerns about malpractice and a disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

### **Recording Concerns:**

The Headteacher should record all low-level concerns on staff safe. Records should include:

- Details of the concern
- How the concern arose
- The context in which the concern arose and Action taken

- Records should be reviewed so that patterns of concerning behaviour can be recognised and appropriate action taken

All staff receive regular training and updates regarding Allegations against staff and low level concerns, how to recognise and report concerns.

#### **14. Policy Development, Implementation, Monitoring and Review Processes**

- This policy was developed by members of the school Senior Management Team, in consultation with the Governing Body.
- The policies adopted have been approved by OFSTED for use by Sheffield Schools. They are regularly reviewed and updated by Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Board.
- These policies are made available for staff and parents/carers to view via our [school website](#). This ensures all reference to policies is up to date.

The Headteachers and Designated Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility for ensuring that all staff are aware of and implement the school and Local Authority designated policies and that all recording and reporting systems are consistent with legislative expectations.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will meet termly with the governor responsible for safeguarding and produce the Yearly Head Teachers safeguarding report. This policy statement and ensuing procedures and practice will be formally reviewed, Spring Term, in consultation with staff and the school Governing Body.

#### **14. Bents Green Hub at Westfield School**

A group of Bents Green students are educated on a daily basis at Westfield School within the Bents Green Hub. The staff working in the hub follow Bents Green School recording and reporting systems. All concerns are recorded on safeguarding **CPOMS** and are discussed with the Westfield Hub Designated Safeguarding deputy (Alex Walker).

All cases are then discussed with the Bents Green Designated Safeguarding Lead, or one of the deputies, on a weekly basis to support and monitor practice. Any urgent or serious issues are supported by telephone or in attendance by an additional member of the Safeguarding Team (from Ringinglow Road Site).

Where additional support is needed and it is not possible for the Bents Green Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy to attend Westfield, support will be sought through the Westfield Safeguarding protocols and personnel.

All such action must be recorded using Bents Green student safeguarding files to enable appropriate sharing and collection of information.

#### **15. Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Safeguarding Governors Board.

# Bents Green School Flowchart of Safeguarding Procedures

**Staff/Visitor have a concern**

Concern about a student –  
Member of staff shares concern with designated safeguarding lead or deputy. This must be done as soon as possible in a confidential space.

Concern about a member of staff – Discuss concern with Head teacher. Produce reports as requested

Concern about the Head teacher-  
Contact Chair of Governors, Laura Gillespie

Log concern on CPOMS as requested by DSL or DSD.  
Ensure all concerns (however small are passed on to the safeguarding team. Small information can form part of a much

All allegations will be taken seriously and investigated with support, as needed, from the Local Authority Designated Officer and Human Resources following Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Board Protocols

Concern considered action to be discussed by safeguarding team in light of other intelligence.

If the concern is an Online Safety Issue

Concern needs to be reported externally

If the concern can be dealt with internally

Safeguarding Team follows **Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Board (SSCB)** protocols for referring concerns.

This could include;  
Seeking advice from the Safeguarding advisory panel  
Informing Sheffield Safeguarding Hub of concerns (with parent/carer awareness under most circumstances) and completing a MACF, informing police, informing other agencies / partners – MAST, residential, producing reports, attending meetings, case conferences as needed

**Decisions made which could include;**

Advice to tutor team re contact home, additional supervision, modifications to timetables, specific teaching input needed.  
Additional support at breaks / lunches  
Monitoring of situation  
Phone call home to be made and by whom  
Meeting to be arranged with family to discuss concerns / consider FCAF/early help assessment.

Once reported to the Safeguarding Team they will follow the **Safeguarding Sheffield Children's Board (SSCB) Protocols** for Online Safety Concerns.

This could include:

Either Safeguarding team or staff who made the initial concern need to report concerns to the school IT Support Technician. Who will then log the concern to Fresh Desk and will make a request for the website/content to be blocked so that no student can access the content again.

Advice to tutor team re contact home, additional supervision, modifications to timetables/computer and electronic device use and specific teaching input needed. Additional support at breaks / lunches. Monitoring of situation. Phone call home to be made and by whom  
Meeting to be arranged with family to discuss concerns / consider FCAF/early help assessment.

If the concern is in the home environment. Parents/carers informed. Offer school support putting the appropriate blocks on hand held devices.

If the concern needs reporting further Safeguarding Team will take appropriate action and notify CEOP's, Police, Sheffield Safeguarding Hub and notify parents/carers if safe to do so.

All actions taken are logged on

**ALL STAFF SHOULD CONTINUE TO RAISE CONCERN IF THEY FEEL A STUDENT IS AT RISK OF HARM AND APPROPRIATE/SUFFICIENT ACTION HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN. SPEAK TO SAFEGUARDING TEAM AND HEADTEACHER OR CHAIR OF GOVERNORS. IF YOU ARE STILL CONCERNED CONTACT SOCIAL CARE YOURSELF. ALL STAFF HAVE A DUTY OF CARE TO SAFEGUARD AND KEEP STUDESNT SAFE.**