



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

To be read in conjunction with the statutory guidance document, ['Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)'](#).

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Statement of Intent

Boldon School is committed to safeguarding, and to promoting the physical, mental, and emotional welfare of every student, both inside and beyond the school premises. We implement a whole-school, preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, and ensure that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of all action taken.

This policy outlines a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that members of the governing board, the Headteacher, and staff understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse, and know to refer concerns to Designated Safeguarding Leads;
- Teaching students how to keep themselves safe, and how to recognise behaviour that is unacceptable;
- Identifying and making provision for any student that has been subject to - or is at risk of - abuse, neglect, or exploitation;
- Working constructively with partner agencies;
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help to deter, reject, or identify people who may pose a risk to children;
- Ensuring that new staff and volunteers are only appointed when all of the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

Boldon School's Designated Safeguarding Leads are David Fairclough and Emily Thompson. In the absence of DSLs, child protection matters will be dealt with by Louise Pippin (Deputy Headteacher).



**Emily Thompson -
Designated Safeguarding
Lead**



**David Fairclough -
Designated Safeguarding
Lead**

Acronyms

This policy features a number of acronyms that are commonly used in the Education sector. A list of these acronyms and their descriptions are listed below:

Acronym	Long Form	Definition
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation	A form of abuse where an individual/group takes advantage of a power imbalance to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity. This is often in exchange for something the victim wants or needs, for the financial advantage/other advantage of the perpetrator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
CSC	Children's Social Care	The branch of the Local Authority that deals with children's social care. Sometimes also referred to as 'Children's Services'.
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	A form of sexual abuse where an individual/group takes advantage of a power imbalance to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child into taking part in sexual activity. This is often in exchange for something the victim wants or needs, for the financial advantage/other advantage of the perpetrator, increased status/other advantage for

		the perpetrator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body responsible for children's services, policy and education. This includes early years settings, schools, higher and further education, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DPO	Data Protection Officer	The person in school responsible for overseeing data protection strategies and implementation of these, to ensure compliance with the UK Data Protection Act.
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	The person(s) in school with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout school.
EEA	European Economic Area	The Member States of the European Union (EU) and three countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA - Iceland, Liechtenstein and

		Norway; excluding Switzerland).
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs of students who had additional, significant needs that impact upon their learning and access to education. The plan identifies any additional support needs or interventions, and the intended impact they will have for the student.
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	An agency supported by the Department for Education, with accountability for funding education and skills training for children, young people, and adults.
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	All procedures involving the 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.
UK GDPR	UK General Data Protection Regulation	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation, and to ensure that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.

HBA	'Honour-Based' Abuse	So-called 'Honour-Based Abuse' involves crimes and acts of abuse that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community.
HMCTS	HM Courts and Tribunals Service	HM Courts and Tribunals Service is responsible for the administration of criminal, civil, and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales. HMCTS is an executive agency sponsored by the Ministry of Justice.
IICSA	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse	The IICSA is analysing case files from the Disclosure and Barring Service to learn more about the behaviours of perpetrators who have sexually abused children in institutions, and to understand institutional responses to these behaviours.
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education	Statutory guidance that outlines schools and colleges' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LA	Local Authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.

LAC	Looked After Children	Children who have been placed in local authority care, or where CSC have looked after children for more than a period of 24 hours.
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Plus	A term relating to a community of people - protected by the Equality Act 2010 - who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or other protected sexual/gender identities.
NPCC	The National Police Chiefs' Council	The NPCC is a national coordination body for law enforcement in the UK, and the representative body for British Police Chief Officers.
PLAC	Previously Looked After Children	Children who were previously in local authority care or were looked after by CSC for more than a period of 24 hours. PLAC are also known as care leavers.
PSHE	Personal, Social, and Health Education	A non-statutory subject in which students learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
RSHE	Relationships, Sex, and Health Education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all students. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction, and sexuality. Also includes

		the promotion of positive relationships.
SCR	Single Central Record	A statutory, secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches/instructors, and volunteers who attend the school in a non-visitor capacity.
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator	A statutory role within all schools. The SENCO maintains oversight and coordinates the school's special educational needs policy and provision of education to students with special educational needs.
SLT	Senior Leadership Team	Staff members who have been delegated leadership responsibilities in school.
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency	An executive agency of the DfE with responsibility for the regulation of the teaching profession.
VSH	Virtual School Head	Virtual School Heads are responsible for promoting the educational achievement of children looked after by the local authority that they work for, and all children who currently have/have had - a social worker.

Definitions

The terms '**children**' and '**child**' refer to anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy, '**safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children**' is defined as:

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

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 engage in one sexual act but not another and can therefore 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. The age of consent is 16.

For the purposes of this policy, '**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, Non-Consensually:** 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.

For the purposes of this policy, '**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, irrespective of 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.

All forms of abuse outlined above will be managed in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements. Due regard will also be given to Boldon School's Child-on-Child Abuse policy where appropriate, which operates in conjunction with this policy.

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 (for example, in relation to the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on children). Children may be abused in a family, institutional, or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. online. Abuse can also 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.

For the purposes of this policy, **'physical abuse'** is defined as a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/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.

For the purposes of this policy, **'emotional abuse'** is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which causes 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.

For the purposes of this policy, **'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 non-penetrative 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.

For the purposes of this policy, **'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 using 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.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard for all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act (1989)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003 - as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Children Act (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act (2009)
- Equality Act (2010)
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations (2012 - as amended)
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act (2019)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act (2022)

Statutory Guidance

- DfE (2015): 'The Prevent Duty'
- DfE (2018): 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018): 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act (2006)'
- DfE (2023): 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)'
- HM Government (2020): 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation'
- HM Government (2021): 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting People Vulnerable to Being Drawn into Terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023): 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for Dealing with Forced Marriage and Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Handling Cases of Forced Marriage'

Non-Statutory Guidance

- DfE (2015): 'What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused'
- DfE (2017): 'Child Sexual Exploitation'
- DfE (2018): 'Information Sharing'
- DfE (2020): 'Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People'
- DfE (2021): 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2022): 'Recruit Teachers from Overseas'
- DfE (2022): 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'

- DfE (2023): 'Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2022): 'Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty: Multi-Agency Guidance'

Local Safeguarding Guidance

- LGBT+ Standards for Schools (South Tyneside Council)
- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board: Escalation Protocol
- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board: Framework for Decision Making
- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board: Multi-Agency Thresholds Guidance
- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership: Operation Endeavour
- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board: Safeguarding Children Exposed to Extremist Ideology
- South Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership: Weapon and Knife Crime Protocol

School Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Alternative Provision Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- British Values Policy
- Children Absent from Education Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Child Sexual Exploitation Policy
- Cyber Security Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Drugs Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- Extremism and Anti-Radicalisation Policy
- Induction of New Staff Policy
- LAC Policy
- Photography Policy
- Prevent Duty Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Reporting Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy (SEMH)
- Single Central Record: Local Authority Guidance
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

- Staff Disqualification Declaration Form
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Technology Acceptable Usage Agreement: Staff
- Technology Acceptable Usage Agreement: Students
- Visitors Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery Policy

2. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Always consider what is in the best interests of the student.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Provide a safe environment in which students can learn.
- Be prepared to identify students who may benefit from early help, social care support, or other external agency support.
- Be aware of the school's systems which support safeguarding, including: any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identities of the DSLs.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring), during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via bulletin or email - as required - and at least annually.
- Be aware of local safeguarding arrangements and understand their role in them.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to CSC, as well as for making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Make a referral to CSC and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Support Social Workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSLs.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow if a child discloses that they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Be aware that a student may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSLs if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of established and emerging safeguarding issues that can put students at risk of harm.
- Be aware of behaviours that could potentially indicate that a student may be at risk of harm.

Teachers, including the Headteacher, have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard students' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.
- Personally report any cases to the police where it appears that an act of FGM has been carried out, also referred to as 'known' cases, as soon as possible.

The Governing Board has a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and always comply with the law.
- Guarantee that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance: ['Working Together to Safeguard Children'](#).
- Confirm that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practices of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment, and ensure these are reflected in the school's policies and procedures.
- Comply with its obligations under section 14B of the Children Act 2004 to supply the local safeguarding arrangements with information to fulfil its functions.
- Ensure that staff working directly with children read at least Part One of KCSIE.
- Ensure that staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A of KCSIE.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding children.

- Ensure a senior board level lead takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description.
- Appoint one or more deputy DSLs to provide support to the DSL; ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL, and that the role is explicit in their job description.
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensure that a member of the governing board is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher or another governor.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the governing board itself, SLT and DSLs.
- Make sure that students are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support students to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in students, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.

- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training updates as required, e.g. emails or bulletins; ensure that these are delivered at least annually.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly.
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle students' allegations against other students.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies, pertaining to the behaviour of students and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for students to express their views and give feedback.
- Establish an early help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated teacher works with the VSH to discuss how the student premium funding can best be used to support LAC.
- Introduce mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly with regard to the student's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for students who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that all members of the governing board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.

- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The Headteacher has a duty to:

- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff.
- Provide staff with the appropriate policies and information upon induction.

The DSLs have a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or support other staff to do so where appropriate.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, and/or support other staff to do so where appropriate.
- During term time, be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Individual schools, working with the DSL, define what “available” means and whether - in exceptional circumstances - availability via phone or other forms of communication is an acceptable substitution for in-person availability.
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Refer cases:
 - To CSC where abuse and neglect are suspected, and support staff who make referrals to CSC.
 - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
 - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
 - To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) guidance.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact for safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues, particularly regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.

- Liaise with relevant staff to ensure effective safeguarding outcomes.
- Liaise with the LA Designated Officers (LADOs) for child protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding, and welfare (including online and digital safety).
- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies, so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and external mental health support teams, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the Headteacher and relevant strategic leads to promote educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing or have experienced. Work with the Headteacher and relevant strategic leads to identify the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
 - Ensuring that the school knows which students have or had a social worker.
 - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these students.
 - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these students.
 - Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these students reach their potential.
 - Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these students are experiencing with teachers and the SLT.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.
- Ensure that a student's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible and within five days when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures – this will be discussed during the staff induction process.
- Work with the governing board to ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, and parents are aware that the school may make referrals for

suspected cases of abuse or neglect, as well as the role the school plays in these referrals.

- Link with safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure that staff are aware of the training opportunities available, and that they have access to the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Undergo training and update this training at least every two years.
- Obtain access to resources that support a culture of safeguarding in school and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings; this includes understanding the difficulties students may have in approaching staff about their circumstances, and considering how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication.
- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters: specifically, to ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes where they are involved; and to support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, including within school, with other schools and with safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

The designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC, and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. The designated teacher is Miss Nicola Korn.

3. Multi-Agency Working

Boldon School contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty; the school is aware of and will follow local safeguarding arrangements.

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 these safeguarding arrangements.

The school will work with CSC, Police, health services and other services to protect the welfare of its students. The school will also contribute to safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable students through the early help process or referrals for

CSC support, and by contributing to multi-agency plans to promote good outcomes for the student and their wider family.

Where a need for CSC support is identified, the school will allow access for CSC from the host LA and - where appropriate - a placing LA for that LA to conduct (or to consider whether to conduct) a section 17 or 47 assessment.

The school also recognises the particular importance of inter-agency working in identifying and preventing child exploitation, the various forms of which are defined within this policy.

Information Sharing

Boldon School recognises that proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies is of the utmost importance to effectively meet students' needs and identify appropriate levels of support.

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. As such, staff will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of students. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information, they will speak to the Designated Safeguarding Leads named within this policy.

4. Early Help and Social Care Support

To provide early help is to provide support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. This support may be provided by the LA's Early Help service or CSC, both of which operate within the South Tyneside Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

For the purposes of this policy, and to provide clarity for all stakeholders, the distinction between the LA's Early Help service and Children's Social Care is outlined below:

Early Help

Early Help in South Tyneside is a family-orientated intervention that works closely with families to provide the right support at the right time for children and families, and to address concerns for children that – without bespoke intervention – may lead to further difficulties or challenges (including a child or children coming to harm or being at risk of harm). Boldon School staff have an established and successful working relationship with the LA's Early Help service and will initiate a referral to the service should areas of need within families be identified.

As part of an Early Help assessment, staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals, and may in some cases act as the lead practitioner. Any such cases

will be kept under constant review, and consideration will be given to a referral to CSC for assessment for statutory services if the student's situation is not improving or is worsening.

Social Care Support

Children's Social Care in South Tyneside acts to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who have been harmed or abused, or are at risk of becoming harmed or abused. All staff at Boldon School understand that they must report concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing to DSLs without delay, who will then make a referral to CSC for assessment for statutory services to be provided. In such cases, DSLs will liaise with other agencies and professionals, and will facilitate inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Local safeguarding arrangements will be followed as required.

Vulnerability Indicators

Any student may benefit from Early Help or CSC support, but staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for support for students who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Have family members in prison or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in family circumstances presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect in other ways.

NB: The above list is not exhaustive.

5. Abuse and Neglect

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect. Staff will 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 DSLs. All staff, especially the 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 harm). 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 DSLs.

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.

6. Specific Safeguarding Issues

There are certain specific safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm – staff will be aware of these issues and will be kept up-to-date with safeguarding issues as they emerge.

[Appendix A](#) of this policy sets out details about specific safeguarding issues that students may experience and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues. Staff will be aware that this list is not exhaustive, and will therefore maintain professional curiosity and vigilance to ensure that safeguarding issues (both established and emerging) are recognised and responded to in a timely manner.

7. Child-on-Child Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, '**child-on-child abuse**' is defined as abuse between children.

Boldon School has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse, as confirmed in this policy's [statement of intent](#).

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between students of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to DSLs if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Child-on-child abuse can manifest in many ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can 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.

All staff will be clear as to the school’s policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they must play in both preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Students will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

The school’s procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school’s Anti-Bullying and Suspension and Exclusion policies, where relevant.

8. Online Safety and Personal Electronic Devices

Boldon School will always adhere to the Online Safety Policy.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all students will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

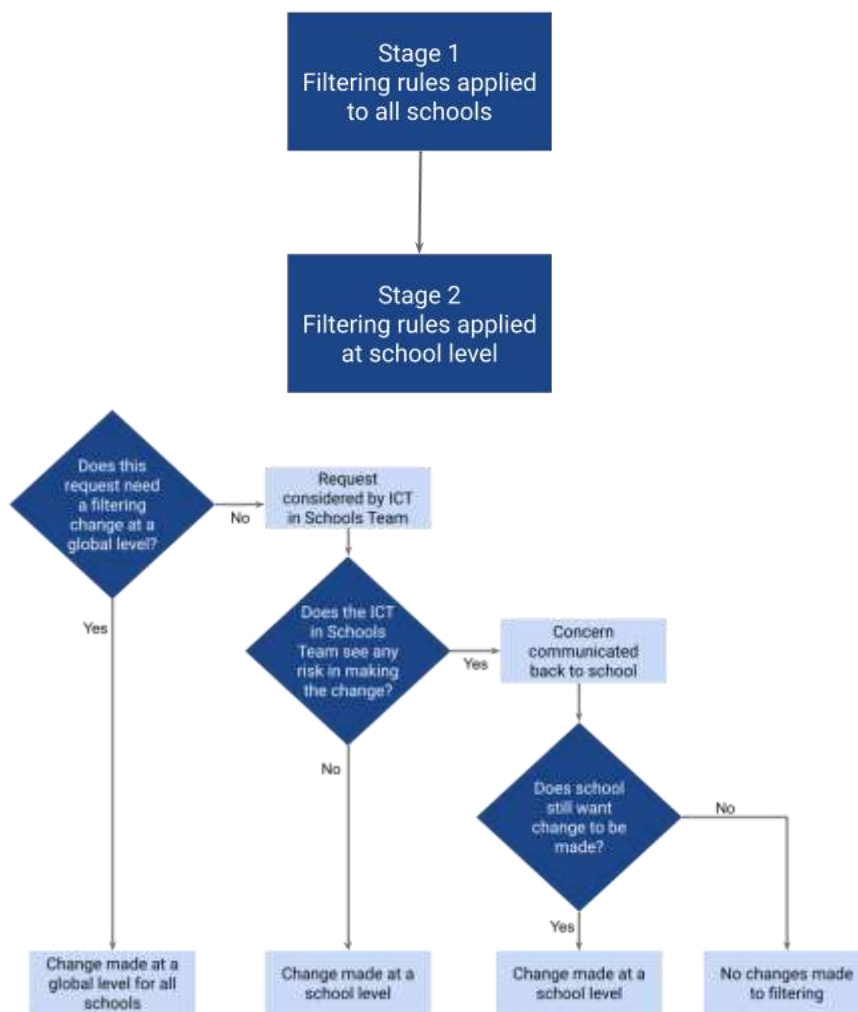
Through training, all staff members will be made aware of:

- Student attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a student's online activity.

The school will ensure that appropriate filtering systems are in place on school devices and school networks to prevent children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with the school's Cyber-Security Policy.

Boldon School currently uses a combination of Smoothwall Filtering and Monitoring Solutions and Impero Alerts – these systems work in tandem to reduce the risk of students being exposed to online safety risks. User activity is moderated in real time, alerting to any concerns and allowing for effective early intervention. Reports are sent to nominated members of staff – including DSLs – who will consider next steps.

What is filtered by the above system and how further restrictions can be applied to effectively safeguard is captured in the flowcharts below:



The school will ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause “over blocking”, which may lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what students can be taught online. The school will also ensure that it meets the [filtering and monitoring standards](#) published by the DfE.

Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place (as above) and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems during their induction and through regular refresher training.

Further information regarding the school’s approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

Communicating with Parents

As part of the usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of students being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor internet use.

The school will also inform parents and carers of established and emerging risks online to support them to take appropriate action to safeguard their child from potential harm.

The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

Reviewing Online Safety

The school will carry out an annual review of its approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by students.

Personal Electronic Devices

The use of personal electronic devices - including mobile phones and cameras - by staff and students is closely monitored by the school, in accordance with the Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy, Students’ Personal Electronic Devices Policy, and relevant Acceptable Use policies.

Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices throughout the course of the school day, as these devices are not subject to filtering and monitoring systems that are in place. Boldon School’s policy on students’ use of personal electronic devices is intended to reduce the risks associated with online activity.

Photographs and videos of students will be carefully planned before any activity. Due consideration will be given to consent, and adherence to the school’s Data Protection Policy and Photography Policy. The DPO will oversee the planning of any events where photographs and videos will be taken.

Where photographs and videos will involve students who are LAC, adopted students, or students for whom there are security concerns, the Headteacher will liaise with DSLs to determine the steps involved. DSLs will, in known cases of students who are LAC or who have been adopted, liaise with the students' social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the students.

Staff will report any concerns about students' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the DSLs, following the appropriate procedures.

Upskirting

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act (2019), it is an offence to operate equipment for the purpose of upskirting. '**Operating equipment**' includes enabling, or securing, activation by another person without that person's knowledge, e.g. a motion-activated camera.

Upskirting will not be tolerated by the school. Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to DSLs, who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may include police involvement.

9. Consensual and Non-Consensual Sharing of Indecent Images and Videos

The school will ensure that staff understand to treat the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as "sexting" or youth-produced sexual images) as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the student, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with instances of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to students depicted in the images, and how and when to report instances of this behaviour.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, staff will ensure that students are not unnecessarily criminalised.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible.

The school's full response to incidents of consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos can be found in the Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery Policy.

10. Context of Safeguarding Incidents

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of school and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly the DSLs, will always consider the context of safeguarding incidents. Assessment of students' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to a child's safety and/or welfare. The school will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to CSC.

11. Students Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

The school recognises that some groups of students can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline, and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect in these groups of students. Additional considerations for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents amongst these groups are outlined below.

Students in Need of Social Workers

Students may need social workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave students vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage.

As a matter of routine, DSLs will hold and use information from the LA about whether a student has a social worker to make decisions in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where a student needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare, e.g. considering the provision pastoral or academic support.

Home-Educated Children

Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them.

In line with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations (2006), the school will inform the LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a student is taken off roll.

Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a student from school for EHE, the school - in collaboration with the LA and other key professionals - will coordinate a meeting with the parent where possible before the final decision has been made, particularly if the student has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

LAC and PLAC

Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. PLAC, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

The governing board will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe. This includes ensuring that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the student.

DSLs and the designated teacher will be provided with the necessary details of students' social workers and the VSH. For PLAC, relevant staff will also be informed of the identities of personal advisers.

Further details of safeguarding procedures for LAC and PLAC are outlined in the school's LAC Policy.

Students with SEND

When managing safeguarding in relation to students with SEND, staff will be aware of the following:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the student's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a student's indicators relate only to their disability.
- Students with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

When reporting concerns or making referrals for students with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a student with SEND, DSLs will liaise with the school's SENCO, as well as the student's parents where appropriate, to ensure that the student's needs are met effectively.

LGBTQ+ Students

The fact that a student may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ students can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a student who is perceived

by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as students who identify as LGBTQ+.

Staff will also be aware that the risks to these students can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these students and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.

Students Requiring Mental Health Support

All staff will be aware that mental health problems can - in some cases - be an indicator that a student has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

12. Use of the School Premises for Non-School Activities

Where the governing board hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep students safe. The school will refer to the DfE's [guidance](#) on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where the governing board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The governing board will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The governing board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Extracurricular Activities and Clubs

External bodies that host extracurricular activities and clubs at the school, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard students and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of students. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSC or the Police, if necessary.

All national governing bodies of sport that receive funding from either Sport England or UK Sport must aim to meet the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

13. Alternative Provision

The school will remain responsible for a student's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a student with an alternative provider, the school will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff. The school will also regularly liaise with staff at the alternative provider to ensure timely and appropriate responses to safeguarding concerns.

14. Work Experience

When a student is sent on work experience, the school will ensure that the provider has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Where the school has students conduct work experience at the school, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the student is over the age of 16.

15. Homestay Exchange Visits

School-Arranged Homestays in the UK

Where the school is arranging for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK in the home of a family to which the child is not related, the responsible adults are in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases, the school is the regulated activity provider. Therefore, the school will obtain all the necessary information required, including a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information, to inform its assessment of the suitability of the responsible adults.

Where criminal record information is disclosed, the school will consider - alongside all other information - whether the adult is a suitable host. In addition to the responsible adults, the school will consider whether a DBS enhanced certificate should be obtained for anyone else aged over 16 in the household.

School-Arranged Homestays Abroad

The school will liaise with partner schools to discuss and agree the arrangements in place for the visit. The school will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to ascertain what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK. The school will use its professional judgement to assess whether the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard every child involved in the exchange. Students will be provided with emergency contact details to use where an emergency occurs, or a situation arises that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Privately Arranged Homestays

Where a parent or student arranges their own homestay, this is a private arrangement. The school is not the regulated activity provider.

Private Fostering

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more for a child aged under 16, or under 18 for a child with SEND, this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act (1989). Where the school becomes aware of a student being privately fostered, they will notify the LA as soon as possible to allow the LA to conduct any necessary checks.

16. Concerns About Students

If a member of staff has any concern about a student's welfare, or a student has reported a safeguarding concern in relation to themselves or a peer, staff will act on this immediately by speaking to the DSLs. Staff will also record the concern as soon as possible on CPOMS, but this will not replace a conversation with DSLs.

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 DSLs if they have a concern about a student.

All staff members are 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.

Where the DSLs are not available to discuss the concern, staff members will contact the Deputy Headteacher about the matter. If a referral is made about a student by anyone other than the DSLs, the DSLs will be informed as soon as possible.

The LA will make a decision regarding what action is required within one working day of the referral being made and will notify the referrer. Staff are required to monitor a referral if they do not receive information from the LA regarding what action is necessary for the student. If the situation does not improve after a referral, the DSLs will ask for reconsideration to ensure that their concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the student.

If Early Help is appropriate, the case will be kept under constant review. If the student's situation does not improve, a referral to CSC will be considered. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, as well as the reasons for making those decisions, will be recorded in writing by the DSL on CPOMS and – where paper records are also maintained - kept securely in the DSL's office.

If a student is in immediate danger, a referral will be made to CSC and/or the Police immediately. If a student has committed a crime, such as sexual violence, the police will be notified without delay.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the school will ensure that the student's wishes are always considered, and that there are systems available for students to

provide feedback and express their views. When responding to safeguarding concerns, staff members will act calmly and supportively, ensuring that the student feels like they are being listened to and believed.

An inter-agency assessment will be undertaken where a child and their family could benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency. These assessments will identify what help the child and family require in preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed.

17. Managing Referrals

The reporting and referral process outlined in the Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart will be followed accordingly. Staff will also be aware of Boldon School's Reporting Safeguarding Concerns flowchart, to enable them to ensure that the relevant members of staff are informed of any concerns and are positioned to respond in a timely manner.

All staff members, in particular the DSLs, will be aware of the LA's arrangements in place for managing referrals. Information provided by the LA in relation to these arrangements will also be shared with staff as part of the school's wider training programme. The DSL will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed. When making a referral to CSC or other external agencies, information will be shared in line with confidentiality requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

The DSLs will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison (including multi-agency liaison where appropriate) in order to ensure the wellbeing of the students involved. The DSLs will work closely with the Police to ensure the school does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

Where a student has been harmed or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the referrer will be notified of the action that will be taken within one working day of a referral being made. Where this information is not forthcoming, the referrer will contact the allocated Social Worker or the MASH for more information.

The school will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other students: this applies to criminal investigations as well as those made by CSC. Where CSC decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if it is believed that the student is at risk of harm. Where CSC decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate and the school agrees with this decision, the school will consider the use of other support mechanisms, such as Early Help, interventions provided by other external agencies, and pastoral support.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the student will be informed of the decisions made, actions taken and reasons for doing so. Discussions of concerns with parents will only take place where this would not put the student or others at potential risk of harm. The school will work closely with parents to ensure that the student, as well as their family, understands the arrangements in place, is effectively supported, and knows where they can access additional support.

18. Concerns About School Safeguarding Practices

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices at the school will be raised with the SLT, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures will be followed as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the SLT, they should access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

19. Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations of Abuse Against Staff

All allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors will be managed in line with the Boldon School's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy, a copy of which will be provided to and understood by all staff. The school will ensure all allegations against staff, including those who are not employees of the school, are dealt with appropriately and that the school liaises with the relevant parties.

When managing allegations against staff, the school will recognise the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and allegations that do not, also known as "low-level concerns", as defined in the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy. Allegations that meet the harms threshold include instances where staff have:

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

Low-level concerns will be handled in line with the Boldon School's Low-Level Safeguarding Concerns Policy, which operates in conjunction with this policy.

20. Communication and Confidentiality

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with school data protection policies.

Where there is an allegation or incident of sexual abuse or sexual violence, the victim is entitled to anonymity by law; therefore, the school will consult its policy and agree

on what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. Where a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school will do all it can to protect the anonymity of the students involved in the case.

Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for its progression and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis. During the disclosure of a concern by a student, staff members will not promise the student confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why.

Where it is in the public interest, and protects students from harm, information can be lawfully shared without the victim's consent, e.g. if doing so would assist the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime. Before doing so, DSLs will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. Where a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it is done so carefully with the reasons for the referral explained to the victim and specialist support offered.

Depending on the nature of a concern, DSLs will discuss the concern with the parents of the students involved. Discussions with parents will not take place where they could potentially put a student at risk of harm. Discussion with the victim's parents will relate to the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, with the aim of understanding their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report. Discussion with the alleged perpetrator's parents will have regards to the arrangements that will impact their child, such as moving classes, with the reasons behind decisions being explained and the available support discussed. External agencies will be invited to these discussions where necessary.

Where confidentiality or anonymity has been breached, the school will implement the appropriate disciplinary procedures as necessary and will analyse how damage can be minimised and future breaches be prevented.

Where a student is leaving the school, DSLs will consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the student's new provider, in addition to the child protection file, that will allow the new provider to support the student and arrange appropriate support for their arrival.

21. Safer Recruitment

The school's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for the care or supervision of children.

- Regularly work in the school at times when children are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

The DfE's [DBS Workforce Guides](#) will be consulted when determining whether a position fits the child workforce criteria.

The governing board will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK.

The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all governors, volunteers, and contractors.

Ongoing Suitability

Following appointment, consideration will be given to staff and volunteers' ongoing suitability to prevent the opportunity for harm to children or placing children at risk.

Referral to the DBS

The school will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity. The duty will also apply in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not in regulated activity or they are suspended.

22. Single Central Record (SCR)

Boldon School keeps a SCR which records all staff, including agency and third-party supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes, who work at the school.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK

For agency and third-party supply staff, the school will also record whether written confirmation from the employment business supplying the member of staff has been received, which indicates that all the necessary checks have been conducted (e.g. all the same checks the school would perform on any individual working in the school or

who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery). The school will also record the date that confirmation was received.

If any checks have been conducted for volunteers, this will also be recorded on the SCR. If risk assessments are conducted to assess whether a volunteer should be subject to an enhanced DBS check, the risk assessment will be recorded.

Written confirmation that supply agencies have completed all relevant checks will also be included.

The school reserves the right to record any other information it deems relevant.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the school.

23. Training

Staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be updated on a regular basis, and whenever there is a change in legislation.

The induction training will cover, at a minimum:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and procedures.
- The Staff Code of Conduct.
- At least Part One of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) (or Annex A, if appropriate).
- The Behaviour Policy.
- The safeguarding response to children who are absent from education.
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training – which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSLs.

All staff members will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates. Further training will cover, at a minimum:

- The issues surrounding sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Contextual safeguarding.
- How to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- CCE and the need to refer cases to the National Referral Mechanism.
- Updates and changes to local safeguarding arrangements, as appropriate.
- Updated online safety training.

Staff will receive opportunities to contribute towards and inform the safeguarding arrangements in the school.

DSLs will undergo child protection and safeguarding training, and update this training at least every two years. The DSLs will also obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, ensuring they keep up-to-date with any developments relevant to their role. This will include training to understand:

- The assessment process for providing Early Help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and CSC referral arrangements.
- How LAs conduct child protection case conferences and child protection review conferences, to enable DSLs to attend and contribute to these effectively when required.
- The importance of providing information and support to CSC.
- Allegations management and the role of the LADO.
- The lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have.
- How to be alert to the specific needs of children in need, students with SEND and/or relevant health conditions, and young carers.
- The importance of internal and external information sharing.
- The Prevent duty.
- The risks associated with online safety, including the additional risks faced online by students with SEND.

Other training relevant to the role of DSLs will be undertaken as required.

24. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed at least annually by DSLs and the Headteacher. This policy will be updated as needed to ensure it is up-to-date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including any lessons learnt.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2023.

Appendices

Specific Safeguarding Issues

This appendix sets out details about some of the specific safeguarding issues that students may experience, and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues. This list is not exhaustive and staff – particularly DSLs – are aware that safeguarding is an ongoing endeavour.

The issues covered are:

1. Domestic Abuse
2. Homelessness
3. Children Absent from Education
4. Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents
5. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
6. Cyber-Crime
7. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
8. Modern Slavery
9. FGM
10. Virginty Testing and Hymenoplasty
11. Forced Marriage
12. Radicalisation
13. Students with Family Members in Prison
14. Students Required to Give Evidence in Court
15. Mental Health
16. Serious Violence

Domestic Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, and in line with the Domestic Abuse Act (2021), '**domestic abuse**' is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person (including conduct directed at someone else, e.g. the person's child) where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. '**Abusive behaviour**' includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse. '**Personally connected**' includes people who:

- Are, have been, or have agreed to be married to each other.
- Are, have been, or have agreed to be in a civil partnership with each other.
- Are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- Each have, or had, a parental relationship towards the same child.
- Are relatives.

The school will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Homelessness

The DSLs will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt.
- Rent arrears.
- Domestic abuse.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Any mention of a family moving home because “they have to”.

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSC where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16 and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family-based and referrals to CSC will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

Children Absent from Education

A child who is absent from school can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, CSE and CCE, particularly county lines. The school will ensure that the response to children persistently being absent from education supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of students becoming absent from education in the future. Staff will monitor students that are absent from the school - particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods - and report them to the DSL following normal safeguarding procedures, in accordance with the Children Absent from Education Policy. The school will inform the LA of any student who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

The school will follow the DfE's [guidance](#) on improving attendance where there is a need to work with children's services due to school absences indicating safeguarding concerns.

Admissions Register

Students are placed on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day that is agreed by the school, or when the school has been notified that the student will first be attending. The school will notify the LA within 5 days of when a student's name is added to the admissions register.

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date and accurate at all times, and will inform parents when any changes occur. Two emergency contacts will be held for each student where possible. Staff will monitor students who do not attend the school on the agreed date and will notify the LA at the earliest opportunity.

If a parent notifies the school that their child will live at a different address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent with whom the student will live.
- The new address.
- The date from when the student will live at that address.

If a parent notifies the school that their child will be attending a different school, or is already registered at a different school, the following information will be recorded on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school.
- The date on which the student first attended, or is due to attend, that school.

Where a student moves to a new school, the school will use a secure internet system to securely transfer students' data.

To ensure accurate data is collected to allow effective safeguarding, the school will inform the LA of any student who is going to be deleted from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations (2006) (as amended), where they:

- Have been taken out of the school by their parents, and are being educated outside the national education system, e.g. home education.
- Have ceased to attend the school, and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the premises.
- Have been certified by the school's medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and their parent has not indicated the intention to the student continuing to attend school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Have been in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The school will also remove a student from the admissions register where the school and LA has been unable to establish the student's whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries into their attendance.

If a student is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the LA with the following information:

- The full name of the student.
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the student lives.
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the student lives.

- The full name and address of the parent with whom the student is going to live, and the date that the student will start living there, if applicable.
- The name of the student's new school and the student's expected start date there, if applicable.
- The grounds for removal from the admissions register under regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations (2006) (as amended).

The school will work with the LA to establish methods of making returns for students back into the school. The school will highlight to the LA where they have been unable to obtain necessary information from parents, e.g. where an address is unknown. The school will also highlight any other necessary contextual information, including safeguarding concerns.

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

For the purposes of this policy, '**child abduction**' is defined as the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim, and strangers.

All staff will be alert to community safety incidents taking place in the vicinity of the school that may raise concerns regarding child abduction, e.g. people loitering nearby or unknown adults conversing with students.

Students will be provided with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe beyond the school environment.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

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:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

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.

The school will recognise that students involved in CCE are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The school will also recognise that students of any gender are at risk of CCE.

School staff will be aware of the indicators that a student is the victim of CCE, 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.
- Regularly becoming absent from school or education or not taking part.

County Lines

For the purposes of this policy, '**county lines**' refers to gangs and organised criminal networks exploiting children to move, store or sell drugs and money into one or more areas, locally and/or across the UK.

As well as the general indicators for CCE, school staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a student may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- 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.

Staff will be made aware of students with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. Staff members who suspect a student may be vulnerable to, or involved in, county lines activity will immediately report all concerns to DSLs.

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.

Cyber-Crime

For the purposes of this policy, '**cyber-crime**' is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. This includes 'cyber-enabled' crimes, i.e. crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online, and 'cyber-dependent' crimes, i.e. crimes that can be committed only by using a computer. Crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as 'hacking'.
- Denial of Service attacks, known as 'booting'.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or 'malware', e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSLs referring students to the National Crime Agency's Cyber Choices programme.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

For the purposes of this policy, '**child sexual exploitation**' 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:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

The school will recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the student'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 student who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes students aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. The school will also recognise that students 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 student 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.
- Regularly becoming absent from school or education or not taking part.
- Having older partners.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Becoming pregnant.

All concerns related to CSE will be managed in line with the school's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy.

Where CSE, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff will discuss the case with DSLs. If - after discussion - a concern remains, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered, including referral to the LA. The LA and all other necessary authorities will then handle the matter to conclusion. The school will cooperate as needed.

Modern Slavery

For the purposes of this policy, '**modern slavery**' encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a student may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism.

FGM

For the purposes of this policy, '**FGM**' is defined as all procedures involving the 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.

All staff will be alert to the possibility of a student being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to share this information with CSC and/or the Police. The school's procedures relating to managing cases of FGM and protecting students will reflect multi-agency working arrangements.

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence,

of FGM on a student under the age of 18. Teachers failing to report such cases may face disciplinary action. Teachers will not examine students, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must personally report to the police where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also discuss any such case with the DSL and involve CSC as appropriate. **NB:** This does not apply to any suspected or at-risk cases, nor if the individual is over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

All staff will be aware of the indicators that students may be at risk of FGM. While some individual indicators they may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the student. It is important to note that the student may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

Indicators that a student may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society.
- The student coming from a community known to adopt FGM.
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM.
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE.

Indicators that FGM may take place soon include:

- When a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin.
- A girl confiding that she is to have a 'special procedure' or a ceremony to 'become a woman'.
- A girl requesting help from a teacher if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- A girl, or her family member, talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where FGM is prevalent.

All staff will be vigilant to the signs that FGM has already taken place so that help can be offered, enquiries can be made to protect others, and criminal investigations can begin. Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include the student:

- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet.
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Having prolonged or repeated absences from school, followed by withdrawal or depression.
- Being reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.

- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

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. Staff will consult with the DSLs who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty

Under the Health and Care Act 2022, it is illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK. It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK.

Virginity testing – also known as hymen, '2-finger' or vaginal examination; this is defined as any examination (with or without contact) of the female genitalia intended to establish if vaginal intercourse has taken place. This is irrespective of whether consent has been given. Vaginal examination has no established scientific merit or clinical indication.

Hymenoplasty - a procedure which can involve a number of different techniques, but typically involving stitching or surgery, undertaken to reconstruct a hymen with the intent that the person bleeds the next time they have vaginal intercourse. Hymenoplasty is different to procedures that may be performed for clinical reasons, e.g. surgery to address discomfort or menstrual complications.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty are forms of violence against women and girls and are part of the cycle of HBA, and can be precursors to child or forced marriage and other forms of family and/or community coercive behaviours, including physical and emotional control. Victims are pressurised into undergoing these procedures, often by family members or their intended husbands' family to fulfil the requirement that a woman remains 'pure' before marriage. Those who 'fail' to meet this requirement are likely to suffer further abuse, including emotional and physical abuse, disownment and even honour killings.

The procedures are degrading and intrusive, and can result in extreme psychological trauma, provoking conditions such as anxiety, depression and PTSD, as well as physical harm and medical complications. Staff will be alert to the possible presence of stress, anxiety and other psychological or behavioural signs, and mental health support should be made available where appropriate.

Victims face barriers in coming forward, e.g. they may not know that the abuse was abnormal or wrong at the time, and may feel shameful, having been taught that speaking out against family and/or the community is wrong, or being scared about the

repercussions of speaking out. The school will educate students about the harms of these practices and dispel myths, e.g. the belief that virginity determines the worth of a woman, and establish an environment where students feel safe enough to make a disclosure.

Students aged 13 and older are considered to be most at risk, but it can affect those as young as 8. Anyone with female genitalia can be a victim regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, disability or socioeconomic status. All staff will be aware of the following indicators that a student is at risk of or has been subjected to a virginity test and/or hymenoplasty:

- A student is known to have requested either procedure or asks for help.
- Family members disclose that the student has already undergone the practices.
- Pain and discomfort after the procedures, e.g. difficulty in walking or sitting for a long period of time which was not a problem previously.
- Concern from family members that the student is in a relationship, or plans for them to be married.
- A close relative has been threatened with either procedure or has already been subjected to one.
- A student has already experienced or is at risk of other forms of HBA.
- A student is already known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A student discloses other concerns that could be an indication of abuse, e.g. they may state that they do not feel safe at home, that family members will not let them out the house and/or that family members are controlling.
- A student displays signs of trauma and an increase in emotional and psychological needs, e.g. withdrawal, anxiety, depression, or significant change in behaviour.
- A student appears fearful of their family or a particular family member.
- Unexplained absence from school, potentially to go abroad.
- Changes in behaviour, e.g. a deterioration in schoolwork, attendance, or attainment.

The above list is not exhaustive, but if any of these indicators are identified, staff members will immediately raise concerns with DSLs. An assessment of the risk they face will be undertaken. If there is believed to be immediate danger, the police will be contacted without delay.

The school will not involve families and community members in cases involving virginity testing and hymenoplasty, including trying to mediate with family or using a community member as an interpreter, as this may increase the risk of harm to the student, including expediting arrangements for the procedure.

Forced Marriage

Forced 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.

Forced marriage is a marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Force can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage can be committed if a person lacks capacity, whether or not coercion plays a part.

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014), a person commits an offence if he or she uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into a marriage and believes - or ought to reasonably believe - that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without free and full consent.

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.

All staff will be alert to the indicators that a student is at risk of, or has undergone, forced marriage. Indicators include, but are not limited to, the student:

- Being absent from school – particularly where this is persistent.
- Requesting for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Being fearful about forthcoming school holidays.
- Being subjected to surveillance by siblings or cousins at school.
- Demonstrating a decline in behaviour, engagement, performance, exam results or punctuality.
- Being withdrawn from school by their parents.
- Being removed from a day centre when they have a physical or learning disability.
- Not being allowed to attend extracurricular activities.
- Suddenly announcing that they are engaged to a stranger, e.g. to friends or on social media.
- Having a family history of forced marriage, e.g. their older siblings have been forced to marry.
- Being prevented from going on to further or higher education.
- Showing signs of mental health disorders and behaviours, e.g. depression, self-harm, anorexia.
- Displaying a sudden decline in their educational performance, aspirations or motivation.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a student who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSLs and local safeguarding procedures will be followed; this could include referral to CSC, the Police or the Forced Marriage Unit. DSLs and the Headteacher will ensure the student is spoken to privately about these concerns and further action taken as appropriate. Students will always be listened to and have their comments taken seriously.

It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the student's family or those with influence in the community without the express consent of the student, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the student in further danger.

Advice will be sought from the Forced Marriage Unit following any suspicion of forced marriage among students.

If a student is being forced to marry, or is fearful of being forced to, the school will be especially vigilant for signs of mental health disorders and self-harm. The student will be supported by DSLs and other Pastoral staff as appropriate, and referrals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff members will make themselves aware of how they can support victims of forced marriage in order to respond to the victims needs at an early stage, and be aware of the practical help they can offer, e.g. referral to social services and local and national support groups.

Local child safeguarding procedures will be activated following concerns regarding forced marriage – the school will use existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with Police and CSC.

The school will support any victims to seek help by:

- Making them aware of their rights and choices to seek legal advice and representation.
- Recording injuries and making referrals for medical examination where necessary.
- Providing personal safety advice.
- Developing a safety plan in case they are seen, e.g. by preparing another reason for why the victim is seeking help.

The school will establish where possible whether students at risk of forced marriage have a dual nationality or two passports.

The school will aim to create an open environment where students feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – this means creating an environment where forced marriage is discussed openly within the curriculum and support and counselling are provided routinely.

The school will take a whole school approach towards educating on forced marriage in the school curriculum and environment – in particular, the school’s RSHE curriculum will incorporate teaching about the signs of forced marriage and how to obtain help. Appropriate materials and sources of further support will be signposted to students. Students will be encouraged to access appropriate advice, information and support.

Teachers and other staff members will be educated about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the signs to look out for.

Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy, ‘**radicalisation**’ refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this policy, ‘**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.

For the purposes of this policy, ‘**terrorism**’ refers to an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public, and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting students from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school’s wider safeguarding duties. The school will actively assess the risk of students being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in students’ behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify students who may be susceptible to extremist ideologies and radicalisation and act appropriately, which will include contacting the DSLs to consider a Prevent referral. The school will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate.

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 student’s parents, unless the school has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result.

The DSLs will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect students against the risk of radicalisation. The DSLs 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, and will signpost staff to additional training and resources as appropriate.

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 being drawn into terrorism”, known as ‘**the Prevent duty**’. The Prevent duty will form part of the school’s wider safeguarding obligations.

The school’s procedures for carrying out the Prevent duty, including how it will engage with and implement the Channel programme, are outlined in the Prevent Duty Policy.

Students with Family Members in Prison

Students with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of ‘[Are you a young person with a family member in prison?](#)’ from Action for Prisoners’ Families where appropriate, and will be given the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Students Required to Give Evidence in Court

Students required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or crimes they have witnessed, will be offered appropriate pastoral support.

Students will be provided with the booklet ‘[Going to Court and being a witness](#)’ from HMCTS where appropriate, and will be given the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Mental Health

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can - in some cases - be an indicator that a student has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems – the school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional. Staff will, however, be encouraged to identify students whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one. Staff will also be aware of how students’ experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Staff who have a mental health concern about a student that is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to the DSLs.

The school will access a range of advice to help them identify students in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies.

In all cases of mental health difficulties, the school’s Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy will be consulted and adhered to at all times.

Serious Violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a student is at risk of, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a student's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

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

Staff members who suspect a student may be vulnerable to or involved in serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSLs.

The school will be aware that the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduce a new duty in early 2023 on a range of specified authorities, such as the Police, to share data and information, and to put plans in place to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Schools will be under a separate duty to cooperate with core duty holders when asked – the school will ensure arrangements are in place to do so.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Action taken by the school

Action taken by another agency

A staff member has concerns about a pupil, or receives a disclosure from a pupil, and takes immediate action – they follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL.

The DSL assesses the report and decides on the next steps, making robust records on the reasons behind any decisions taken.

A referral is not required, and action is taken within the school, e.g. pastoral support or early help.

A referral is made if concerns escalate.

The DSL makes a referral to children's social care, or the police, where this is appropriate.

Within one working day, a social worker should make a decision about the type of response that is required.

The pupil is in immediate need of protection and the referrer is informed.

Enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (A) are made and the referrer is informed.

Enquiries under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 are made and the referrer is informed.

No formal assessment required and the referrer is informed.

Appropriate emergency action is taken by social workers, the police or the NSPCC.

Pupils at risk of significant harm are identified and a child protection plan is considered and/or put in place.

The school considers pastoral support and/or an early help assessment and accesses external services.

Staff do all that they can support social workers. At all stages, staff keep the pupil's circumstances under review, involving the DSL, and re-refer if appropriate to ensure the pupil's circumstances improve.

Process for Reporting and Managing Safeguarding Concerns 2023-24

