



# SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Approved by: SLT

Approved date: SEPTEMBER 2023

To be reviewed by: SLT

Review date: September 2024 or at next update of requirements or government guidance, whichever is sooner

Accessibility: Available on the school website and paper copy on request

Scope: Ashbridge Independent School and Nursery,  
Ashbridge-on-Ribble Nursery, Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy  
Farm, The Fledglings Nursery

## **Contents**

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS.....	4
KEY CONTACTS .....	6
GUIDANCE FOLLOWED AND SAFEGUARDING RELATED POLICIES .....	8
UNDERSTANDING ABUSE AND NEGLECT .....	9
Definitions of Abuse and Neglect (KCSIE September 2023) .....	9
Indicators of Abuse and Neglect .....	11
TYPES OF SAFEGUARDING ISSUES INCLUDING CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING .....	12
Mental Health .....	13
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) .....	13
Child on Child Abuse .....	13
Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment .....	15
Serious Violence .....	16
Radicalisation .....	16
PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW REGARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD .....	17
Procedures .....	17
Listening to Children.....	18
Early Help.....	18
Reporting for Specific Safeguarding Issues .....	19
Sharing Information to Destination Settings .....	21
PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW REGARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF .....	22
Harms Threshold.....	22
Procedures if an allegation meets the harms threshold.....	22
Procedures relating to 'low-level concerns' .....	24
SAFER RECRUITMENT AND FURTHER TRAINING .....	25
Recruitment Procedures.....	25
Induction Procedures.....	25
Ongoing training .....	26
DSL Training .....	26
MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING .....	27

Proprietor's role .....	27
DSLs and their role .....	27
Annual Review .....	28
Staff Concerns about Safeguarding Practice .....	28
OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....	29
Information sharing .....	29
Online Safety and the Use of Mobile Technology including Camera Use.....	29
Teaching Children How to Keep Themselves and Others Safe .....	30
Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children .....	30
Children potentially at greater risk of harm .....	31
APPENDIX 1- List of government guidance referred to and/or followed .....	33
APPENDIX 2 – Referral Flowchart (taken from KCSIE September 2023.....	34
APPENDIX 3 – General Advice for Staff .....	35
Key points for all staff to remember .....	35
Advice for listening to children .....	35
APPENDIX 4 – DSL Job Description .....	37

## **INTRODUCTION AND AIMS**

The safety, wellbeing and best interest of children is at the forefront of all we do. We believe that everyone involved within our school and nursery community have a duty to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes all staff, supply staff, freelance and peripatetic staff, contractors, students and volunteers.

- Safeguarding and promoting 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 consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to ensure all children have the best outcomes

The ethos of Ashbridge supports the development of a positive self-image, increases confidence and promotes an atmosphere of trust. Staff listen to children and children are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings.

- As adults have a huge impact on children, we ensure that through our code of conduct, policies, procedures and daily practices all adults, employees and volunteers:
- Are positive role models for children
- Promote a happy, caring and safe environment
- Comply within the agreed policies of the school and nursery
- Create an environment of trust and respect
- Recognise and value strengths in each other and use these to support everyone
- Encourage children to think for themselves, ask questions and find answers
- Welcome and support visitors to school and nursery
- Listen to children and take any concerns they have seriously
- Exercise professional curiosity and know the early signs of abuse and neglect
- Receive regular, high-quality training across a wide range of safeguarding topics

Through these actions we aim to:

- Promote a culture where children are always respected and listened to
- Promote a culture of safety, equality and protection
- Promote a culture where staff act in the best interest of each child and are confident to raise any concerns, and always act in a professional and confidential manner
- Create an environment and experience for all children which enables them to develop a positive self-image, a sense of independence and autonomy and a secure understanding of British values

- Give staff the opportunity to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy, to utilise the expertise they build up through safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis
- Ensure children are confident to talk to a member of staff if they are worried about something

We comply with all statutory requirements for reporting information, which are linked to Safeguarding including reporting to the DFE, DBS, OFSTED and Health and Safety Executive where appropriate.

## KEY CONTACTS

The table below details all main contacts for safeguarding related concerns.

The first point of contact should be a DSL, or in the unlikely event of none being available, Company Director Sarah Carr should be contacted. Whilst each trained DSL has responsibility for a particular setting, all DSLs have a complete safeguarding picture and can advise on safeguarding concerns.

In addition, all nurseries have additional members of the management team with responsibilities for safeguarding, who are all trained as Designated Senior People (DSP).

All staff have the right to report safeguarding concerns directly to the external contacts also detailed in the table.

NAME	ROLE	PHONE	EMAIL
Karen Mehta	Lead DSL (School, Lindle Lane, Ashbridge on Ribble), lead responsibility for Ashbridge School, Headteacher	07518 431728 01772 619900	karen.mehta @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Charlotte Bingham Brindle	DSL, lead responsibility for Ashbridge Nursery, Director of Compliance	07771 591600 01772 619900	charlotte.binghambrindle @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Grace Cole	DSL, lead responsibility for Ashbridge Nursery at The Fledglings, Director of Operations	07970 054753	grace.cole @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Alice Turner	DSL, lead responsibility for Maxy Farm, Director of Quality of Care	07977 922345 01772 733312	dr.alice.turner @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Nazma Ahmed	DSL, lead responsibility for Ashbridge on Ribble, Director of HR and Nursery Operations	07976 754165 01772 561186	nazma.ahmed @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Chelsea Mounsey	DSP, Ashbridge Nursery Head of Nursery	01772 619900	chelsea.mounsey @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Emma Murray	DSP, Ashbridge Nursery Manager	01772 619900	emma.murray @ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Natalie Pratt	DSP, Ashbridge Nursery Manager	01772 561186	natalie.pratt @ashbridgeschool.co.uk

Emma Newlove	DSP, Ashbridge-on-Ribble Nursery Nursery Manager	01772 561186	emma.newlove@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Alex Goch-Saraczyn	DSP, Ashbridge-on-Ribble Nursery Under 2s Manager	01772 561186	alex.goch@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Julie Fazackerley	DSP, Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm Head of Nursery	01772 733312	julie.fazackerley@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Laura Wood	DSP, Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm Head of Nursery	01772 733312	laura.wood@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Charlotte Twist	DSP, The Fledglings Nursery Manager	01995 642148	charlotte.twist@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Arianna Visani	DSP, The Fledglings Deputy Nursery Manager	01995 642148	arianna.visani@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
Sarah Carr	Contact if no DSLs available or if a concern relates to the Headteacher, Company Director	07850 877826	sarah.carr@ashbridgeschool.co.uk
	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>EMAIL/ONLINE</b>
	Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP)		safeguardingpartnership.org.uk/about/#CSAP_Contact
	Lancashire Children's Social Care	0300 1236720 (8:00 – 17:00) 0300 1236722 (17:00 – 8:00)	N/A
	Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)	01772 536694	lado.admin@lancashire.gov.uk
	Police Non-Emergency	101	Online form available - reportitonline.lancashire.police.uk
	Extremism concerns	020 7340 7264	counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
	NSPCC Reporting Abuse Helpline	0800 800 5000	help@nspcc.org.uk
	National Domestic Abuse Helpline	0808 2000 547	Online form available – nationaldahelpline.org.uk
	Men's Domestic Abuse Advice Line	0808 801 0327	info@mensadviceline.org.uk

## **GUIDANCE FOLLOWED AND SAFEGUARDING RELATED POLICIES**

Appendix 1 details all statutory and other guidance that we follow.

Our internal policies, together with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 underpin safeguarding and guide us in promoting children's welfare, keeping them safe from harm and working in the best interests of every child.

Almost all policies have some link to safeguarding issues, but some specific company policies which help us to underpin effective safeguarding include:

Anti-Bullying	Missing Children
Attendance	Personal Development
Behaviour	Prevent Duty
Children Missing Education	Recording and Monitoring
Complaints	Safeguarding Looked After Children
Curriculum	Safer Recruitment
Employee Code of Conduct	SEND
Exclusion	Technology and Online Safety
Health and Safety	Whistleblowing
Induction Procedures	Visitors

All policies listed are available on the school website or by request and are implemented across the company.



## UNDERSTANDING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse and neglect are serious safeguarding issues and if a member of staff has a concern it must always be acted upon. Children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school and nursery, inside and outside the home, including extra-familial harms, and online. Whilst abuse can take place wholly offline, technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and often occurs through online channels and daily life at the same time. Children can abuse other children online through abusive, harassing and misogynistic/misandrist messages, sharing of indecent images and the sharing of abusive images and pornography. This type of abuse, called child on child abuse, would always be treated as a safeguarding issue for both the receiver and sender of such content. As detailed later in this document, some groups are more vulnerable to abuse and this should always be considered.

In most cases of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues multiple issues overlap with one another and can be associated with factors or other people outside of the school or nursery. Indicators of abuse are wide and varied but symptoms of abuse do not always show that a child has been abused. As detailed later in this policy, if a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care or the police immediately. Staff do not need to wait for an incident to occur to make a referral if they have reason to believe a child may be at risk of harm or has been harmed. Staff must always act in the best interests of the child, should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and must never assume that somebody else will take action as this may prevent a child receiving the support they need. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to a designated safeguarding lead.

### Definitions of Abuse and Neglect (KCSIE September 2023)

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. Some of the types of abuse and neglect are listed below; however this list should not be seen as exhaustive. Many types of abuse can occur partially or wholly online as well as face to face.

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by

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

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm

may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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

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

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

There are many indicators that may suggest a child is being abused or neglected. Some of the following signs may be indicators of abuse or neglect, although it is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list and a child displaying one or more of these indicators may not be being abused or neglected:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or over-reliant on staff or parents, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty or children with poor hygiene
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- Children who are having problems at school or nursery, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry
- Children who talk about being left alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers
- Children who reach development milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason
- Children who are regularly absent from school or nursery
- Children who are reluctant to go home
- Children with poor attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to the practitioners' concerns
- Parents who collect their children when under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Children who are concerned about younger siblings without explaining why
- Children who talk about running away
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements

It is essential to remember that all children and families are different and assumptions should never be made about why behavioural changes, mood changes or injuries are occurring based on the child's background or usual behaviours. This is particularly important for children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions. Practitioners must never assume that an injury or behaviour is happening because of a child's additional need or disability.

## **TYPES OF SAFEGUARDING ISSUES INCLUDING CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING**

There are a wide range of safeguarding issues that children may experience and these include, but are not exclusively:

- Abduction, including by other members of the family group
- Bullying including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Child on child abuse
- Children who are absent from education
- Children missing from home or care
- Child criminal exploitation
- Child sexual exploitation
- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Community safety incidents
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Gangs and Youth Violence
- Gender-based Violence/Violence against women and girls including Female Genital Mutilation
- Homelessness
- Mental Health
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Serious Violence
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools
- So-called honour-based violence, including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage
- Trafficking
- Upskirting
- Youth produced sexual imagery

Specific safeguarding concerns require a range of approaches and we use government and locally agreed guidance to support our own policies and procedures, together with advice from organisations such as the NSPCC. Different settings will experience different risk levels for the types of safeguarding issues they are likely to come across but it is important to remember that any issue can happen anywhere. Some specific safeguarding concerns are expanded upon below and further details can be found on these and many other safeguarding issues in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

### Mental Health

In some cases, mental health problems can be an indicator that a child is suffering or has suffered from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where we have concerns about a child's mental health, referrals will be made to relevant professionals when necessary. If a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern, the usual child protection procedures will be followed.

Staff are trained to recognise the early signs and symptoms of mental health issues in children and would follow the same reporting procedures as they would for any other concern, which could include referral to external organisations such as CYPMHS and/or discussions with children and parents. Children are educated about mental health through the PDP programme in school and daily activities in nursery.

Staff wellbeing and mental health has a high priority and team members know who to talk to if they have concerns about their mental health. As well as having a Designated Mental Health Lead, all DSLs are also trained as Mental Health Practitioners and can provide support to any team member.

### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of child abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity. Children between the ages of 12-16 are most likely to suffer from CSE and CCE but it is important for us to remember that it can happen to any child at any time and we are always vigilant to the possibility of CSE/CCE happening within our settings. CSE/CCE can be both physical or online and can be a one-off occurrence or series of incidents. The experience of girls who are criminally and sexually exploited can be very different to that of boys and if any member of staff has any concerns around CSE or CCE they should speak to a DSL immediately.

### Child on Child Abuse

All children can abuse other children and all staff need to recognise the indicators of child on child abuse and know how to report it. It is important to note that even if there are no reports of child on child abuse it may still be happening. Child on child abuse will not be tolerated and will always be taken seriously. It is a serious safeguarding issue and should never be tolerated or

passed off as part of growing up, 'having a laugh', 'boys being boys', or 'banter'. It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Whilst it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators of child on child abuse, and that children with SEND could be more vulnerable, any child could be the victim of child on child abuse.

- Safeguarding issues that can occur from child on child abuse include, but are not limited to:
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships between children (known as teenage relationship abuse)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

In order to minimise the risk of child on child abuse as much as possible, the school and nursery has clear anti-bullying and behaviour procedures, including the prevention of cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, which are understood by staff and children and are followed consistently. The caring and open ethos of the school and nursery also means that children are encouraged to share their concerns and look out for each other. We also develop strong and open relationships with parents/carers so they feel comfortable discussing any concerns they may have regarding child on child abuse.

All staff have a duty to challenge inappropriate behaviours between children in line with the behaviour policy to ensure children are protected and child on child abuse does not become accepted or normalised. If staff have any concerns about child on child abuse they must be

reported to a DSL. It is also essential to remember that a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to any form of sexual activity. If a crime is thought to have been committed, the Police will be informed, even if the child is under the legal age of responsibility of 10.

The school and nursery are also aware that children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline and will provide additional support where necessary. Additional barriers in recognising abuse and neglect in this group can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further explanation
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (include prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in reporting these challenges
- Cognitive understanding regarding understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content

The school and nursery also recognise that children who are LGBT+ or perceived to be LGBT+ may be targeted by other children and that it is important they feel they have trusted adults they can speak to. The school and nursery ensure their curriculum and actions support any children who are part of the LBGT community.

#### Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and includes rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. In all cases the victim has not consented or the person committing the offence does not reasonably believe that the victim consented. Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose and consent can be withdrawn at any time.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to; sexual comments or jokes, physical behaviours, displaying images of a sexual nature and online sexual harassment such as the non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos or unwanted sexual comments or messages.

Whilst reports of child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment are uncommon within the age of children cared for at Ashbridge, it can occur between two children of any age and sex. Therefore any signs, reports or concerns must always be taken seriously and be acted upon in a timely manner. This includes incidents that have occurred out of school or nursery or online. Victims must always know that they will be supported and kept safe. Victims should never be

made to feel ashamed about making a report of abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment and should be reassured that they will be taken seriously. We take a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and will not tolerate any unacceptable behaviour. We recognise that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, but we do have strong relationships with all children and have strong reporting mechanisms in place. Staff must report any report of potential sexual violence or sexual harassment to a DSL who will follow reporting procedures as set out in this document.

All staff should also consider that harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) seen in young children are often, but not always, a symptom of their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and materials. Examples of HSBs that may be seen in the age of children in our care include, but are not limited to:

- Taking younger children to 'secret' places or hideaways or playing 'special' games with them (eg doctor and patient, removing clothing etc.)
- Insistence on hugging or kissing a child when the child does not want to.
- Frequently using aggressive or sexual language about adults or children.
- Showing sexual materials to younger children.
- Exposing their genitals to younger children.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 provides detailed guidance on reporting and managing reports of sexual violence and harassment which will be followed should any incidences occur.

### Serious Violence

Whilst the risk of children between the ages of 0-11 being drawn into serious violent crime and county lines are low, it is important to still be aware of the indicators which may suggest this is happening. Indicators may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in performance and/or wellbeing
- Signs of self-harm or signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Radicalisation

We recognise that radicalisation can occur at any of our settings and from any community.

For the vast majority of our children, the risk of radicalisation relates to their families becoming radicalised, rather than the child themselves. However, although the risk of any of our children becoming radicalised is low, we are still vigilant to it, particularly for children in the higher years of school. The Prevent Duty policy covers radicalisation in more detail.



# **PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW REGARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

## Procedures

The same initial procedures are in place for all concerns about a child, with some specific safeguarding concerns having different procedures once the initial report has occurred. The flowchart set out in appendix 2 details the procedure for referring a child to social care and the likely action path following the referral.

If a member of staff has a concern about the safety or welfare of a child, no matter how small the concern is, they should refer to the DSL immediately.

In the case of a child making a disclosure to a member of staff the staff member should listen and then write down everything that has been said to them. Further advice is given in appendix 2.

Any possible evidence, such as written notes, CPOMS records, mobile phones or other electronic devices containing evidence, clothing etc should also be given to the DSL wherever possible. Members of staff should never take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar and must not make audio recordings of a child's disclosure.

The DSL will consider the concern and decide on the appropriate action which may include:

- Managing support internally through either the school and nursery's own pastoral procedures or local support
- An early help assessment
- A referral to statutory services if it is thought a child might be in need or is in need.
- An immediate referral to children's social care will be made if it is thought a child is at risk of harm or has been harmed.
- Where it is felt a crime has been committed, the Police will also be contacted.

Staff members should note that anyone can make a referral to external agencies, not just DSLs.

Any member of staff who feels that appropriate action has not been taken by the Designated Senior Lead or Designated Senior Person has a duty to refer to another DSL or Children's Social Care.

Parental consent does not need to be given for referrals to statutory agencies if it is believed a child is at risk of harm or has been harmed, as detailed in 'Information Sharing' in this document. Parents are informed of this upon enrolment.

In line with legislation set out for registered school and early years settings, we work within local procedures as promoted by Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) and meet our duty to inform our regulatory bodies and refer to Children's Social Care, and where relevant the LADO, the Police or the local Prevent Lead who have a duty to investigate any concerns we have about a child.

In all cases we follow the advice given by Children's Social Care, CASP, LADO and the Police. However, if we feel appropriate action is not being taken by external agencies, we will be persistent in making referrals until we are satisfied that an appropriate response is being made.

### Listening to Children

There are a number of arrangements in place in both school and nursery for listening to children and providing early help, the main one being the accessibility of adults and the positive relationships they foster with the children in their care. We acknowledge that children may not recognise their experiences as harmful or feel ready or able to disclose neglect or abuse. It is therefore essential that positive relationships are formed with all children so staff can look out for signs of neglect and abuse and children feel safe sharing their experiences with their caregivers, teachers and other supporting staff. A culture of listening to children is in place across the settings to allow children to feel comfortable sharing information with their caregivers and we encourage staff to show professional curiosity, particularly when they have emerging concerns about a child.

There are also specific times where it is reinforced to all children in a way appropriate to their age and stage of development that they can speak to any trusted adults. In school this occurs through the Personal Development Programme and in class. The key person system in nursery fosters strong relationships between children and adults so children feel comfortable and confident sharing their concerns with adults.

### Early Help

Early concerns regarding children's development and wellbeing may be addressed by considering the Lancashire Continuum of Need (CON). All children are assessed at least annually against the Lancashire CON thresholds.

A DSL will lead on any early help assessment and will liaise with other staff and external agencies in the best interests of the child. Whilst any child may benefit from early help, it is important to be particularly vigilant towards children within one or more of the categories below:

- Is a non-communicative young child or baby
- Is disabled and/or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)

- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs or being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is persistently absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods

Early help procedures may include advice or support or signposting families to universal or additional services. Following this it may be appropriate to initiate a CAF (Common Assessment Framework form).

#### Reporting for Specific Safeguarding Issues

In addition to normal reporting procedures, some safeguarding issues require different or additional action.

#### *Sharing of nudes or semi-nude images and/or videos*

If an incident of sharing of nudes or semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is reported or suspected, the school follows the following procedures:

- Incident referred to a DSL as soon as possible who will discuss the concern with any relevant staff members.
- Parents will be informed unless there is a good reason to believe that doing so would put the child at risk of harm.
- Discussions will be held with the child(ren) involved and their parent(s) to resolve the situation.
- If at any point it is thought that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to Children's Social Care through the usual process.
- If necessary, in order to protect children, the Police will be informed immediately, including for children under the age of criminal responsibility.

- Under no circumstance should the image(s)/video(s) be viewed by staff or other children, copies of the image(s)/video(s) be taken for evidence or the image(s)/video(s) shared with anyone, including parents/carers.

#### *Child on Child Sexual Harassment, Violence or other Harmful Sexual Behaviours*

If child on child sexual harassment, sexual violence or incidents of other harmful sexual behaviours are reported or suspected, the school follows the following procedures:

- Incident referred to a DSL as soon as possible who will discuss the concern with any relevant staff members.
- DSL carries out a risk assessment considering the severity of the allegation and the people involved.
- Parents will be informed unless there is a good reason to believe that doing so would put the child at risk of harm.
- Discussions will be held with the child(ren) involved and their parent(s) and normal safeguarding and referral procedures will apply, with specific consideration given to the age and developmental stages of the child(ren) involved, any SEND needs and any wider contextual concerns as appropriate
- Consideration will be given as to whether there may have been any other victims
- If at any point it is thought that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to Children's Social Care through the usual process.
- If it is thought a crime has occurred the Police will be informed immediately, including for children under the age of criminal responsibility.
- Any incidents are recorded on the serious incident log which is monitored by the Headteacher or Lead DSL. The headteacher or DSL will also consider if the incident has occurred due to wider cultural issues in the school or nursery and take action if required.
- In the case of unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports, consideration should be given to whether the child may be in need of help or may have been abused by someone else.

#### *Child on Child Abuse*

In the case of any child on child abuse, both the perpetrator and victim will be supported by providing them with staff to talk to, referring to counselling or other services if appropriate and meeting with parents if required. Each case will be considered on an individual basis to ensure the children involved receive the most suitable support for them. Both perpetrator(s) and victim(s) would be treated as having a safeguarding concern and we would follow procedures accordingly as set out in this policy.

#### *Radicalisation*

In the case of children suspected of being at risk of radicalisation, the member of staff and DSL

must consider the most appropriate form of action, which may be Children's Social Care or Channel (by ringing the non-emergency Police number 101) for example. This is detailed further in the Prevent Duty policy.

#### *Female Genital Mutilation*

If a girl informs a member of staff that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has been carried out on them, or if a member of staff observes physical signs that suggests an act of FGM has been carried out, there is a specific legal duty for anyone carrying out teaching activity, whether a qualified teacher or not, to personally report the act to the Police. This includes nursery practitioners, teachers and teaching assistants. As a company we follow all mandatory procedures as set out in government guidance. Support from DSLs would always be provided and the incident should be reported to them as well as the Police.

#### *Children Absent from Education*

In the case of children being absent from education, we follow procedures as set out in our Attendance Policy and Recording Procedures and Children Missing Education Policy which have been written in accordance with government guidance relating to Children Missing Education. This includes contacting parents by 9:30am on the first day of absence if there has been no contact from them and reporting to the local authority if a child has been absent without authorisation for more than 10 days.

#### *Sharing Information to Destination Settings*

When a child who has/is being monitored under child protection, or had/has involvement from Children's Social Care leaves Ashbridge, a CPOMS file transfer is undertaken as soon as possible to allow the new setting/school to continue supporting the child and have support in place for when they arrive. In addition to this, the DSLs will consider if there is any other relevant information which could be shared with the child's new setting/school in advance to them leaving Ashbridge and will liaise with the new setting as required.

## **PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW REGARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

There are two types of concerns that may be raised against a member of staff which need to be acted upon;

- Concerns /allegations that meet the harms threshold
- Concerns / allegations that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to as 'low-level concerns'.

### Harms Threshold

The harms threshold is met if it is found that anyone working in the school or nursery, including peripatetic staff, supply staff, volunteers and or contractors has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child,
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child,
- has behaved in a way towards a child or children that would suggest that her or she may pose a risk to children and/or,
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

The last point includes behaviour that may have happened outside of the school or nursery, both in person and/or online.

### Procedures if an allegation meets the harms threshold

If a member of staff has reason to believe that someone working in the school or nursery has acted in a manner to meet the harms threshold, they should refer to their Lead DSL immediately, or in their absence, Company Director Sarah Carr. The list of Lead DSLs can be found on page 6.

With all allegations the first response must be to look after the welfare of the child. The assigned DSL, in conjunction with other DSLs if necessary, will ensure the child/ren are not at risk of further harm.

Following on from this, the DSL, acting as case manager, will discuss the allegation with other DSLs and consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. In the case of this referring to supply staff provided by an agency or contractors working for a company, the agency or company would be contacted immediately and the school and nursery would expect them to be fully involved in any investigation or other action. This would include looking at previous patterns of behaviour and any prior concerns. The person whom the allegation has been made against will be told at an appropriate time and supported throughout the process. The DSL will deal with the allegations quickly but thoroughly with the aim of reducing stress for the person involved.

DSLs will always act in line with local and national procedures. If it is felt a crime has been committed, the Lead DSL will immediately inform the police and the LADO. Some of the specific procedures to follow are detailed below.

OFSTED must be informed as soon as is practicable and within 14 days of any allegations against anyone working or living on the premises, or of any abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises.

If it is felt an employee may need to be suspended the decision will be considered carefully and the case manager will be guided by advice from the LADO.

Suspension is not in itself a disciplinary procedure and is done without prejudice.

If the services of an employee, contractor, supply staff, volunteer or any other relevant person working are no longer used, either through dismissal, resignation or any other reason, and the DBS criteria has been met, the company will report the person to the DBS immediately. The DBS criteria is that they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

Where a teacher has been dismissed, or would have been dismissed had they not resigned due to a case of professional misconduct the company will make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where necessary. The TRA work on behalf of the Secretary of State, in line with their guidance Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers (February 2022).

In all cases of allegations against staff the Lead DSL will keep an accurate written record in line with local procedures.

This record will be used to provide clarification in the case of future DBS check investigations and will be kept until the accused reaches retirement age, or for 10 years if they reach retirement age before 10 years have passed.

Allegations made against teachers who are no longer teaching will be referred directly to the Police.

If an accused person resigns, or no longer offers their services as a volunteer, the allegation will still be investigated in line with procedures and relevant reports will be made.

Any allegations against staff which have been found to be malicious will be removed from personnel records.

Any allegations against the proprietor(s) will be considered in line with local procedures.

### Allegations relating to DSLs

If there is a concern relating to one of the DSLs, this must be reported to company Lead DSL, Headteacher, Karen Mehta. The Lead DSL would carry out all processes as described above and the DSL whom the allegation has been made against would be informed at the same stage as any other member of staff.

If there is a concern relating to the Lead DSL, Director Sarah Carr and the LADO should be informed immediately. The Lead DSL must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the company director and LADO. Equally, if staff members feel there would be a conflict of interest by reporting a concern to the Lead DSL or the company director, the LADO should be contacted directly by the person with the concern.

### Procedures relating to 'low-level concerns'

Low-level concerns and allegations are those that do not need meet the harms threshold but still need to be investigated. A low-level concern is any concern, however small, relating to anyone working in the school or nursery who has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct; including inappropriate conduct outside of work, but does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children or families
- Having favourites
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door or;
- Humiliating children

If members of staff, including peripatetic teachers, supply staff, volunteers and contractors have any low-level concerns about another person working in the school or nursery they must always refer to the Lead DSL, as detailed in the Employee Code of Conduct. The DSL will consider the nature of the concern/allegation and how best to manage it. They will, together with the support of other DSLs if appropriate; collect evidence, speak to the witnesses and person who the allegation is about and record the allegation in writing with reasons for any decisions made. This is likely to be undertaken as part of the company disciplinary policy but may also be logged on a contact and monitoring form. Both these methods allow patterns of behaviour to be established to allow the Lead DSL to consider if further action needs to be taken. If there is any doubt if a low-level concern meets the harm threshold, the LADO will be contacted.

Low-level concerns will always be analysed to consider if there are any wider cultural issues within the school and nursery or whether policies and procedures need to be amended or revised.



## **SAFER RECRUITMENT AND FURTHER TRAINING**

### Recruitment Procedures

Our Safer Recruitment Policy details our procedures for ensuring staff are suitable to work for us and with children. Main parts of the policy include but are not limited to:

- Thorough application and interview process including online vetting.
- Staff not starting work until at least two references have been received, a DBS check processed and, where appropriate, a suitability check carried out.
- Staff in regulated activity not starting work until a barred list check has been carried out and, in the case of staff carrying out teaching work, a teacher prohibition check being carried out.

In the case of a DBS for a member of staff in regulated activity not arriving before a member of staff starting work, a risk assessment being put in place and all other checks listed on the Single Central Register being carried out.

Regulated activity is defined as:

- Regular work in school and/or nursery with opportunity for contact with children.
- Unsupervised activities; teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on wellbeing, if done regularly.
- Relevant personal care, eg washing or dressing, or health care by or supervised by a professional. This applies to any child, even if only done once.

Personal care includes helping a child with eating and drinking for reasons of illness or disability, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability.

Health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional.

Regular, for the purpose of regulated activity, is defined as once a week or more often, on 4 or more days in a 30 day period or overnight (2am – 6am).

### Induction Procedures

Comprehensive induction procedures ensure all staff and volunteers have a secure understanding of safeguarding and child protection procedures, how to listen to children and be aware of changing behaviour, arrangements for whistle blowing and how to refer on to external agencies when required.

Thorough induction procedures and training relating to safeguarding for all staff including DSLs include, but is not limited to receiving, reading and understanding:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent prompt cards
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annex B (September 2022)
- What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (March 2015)
- Whistleblowing policy
- Technology and Online Safety policy including filtering and monitoring
- Behaviour Strategy
- Children Absent from Education Policy
- Prevent Duty policy
- Acceptable Use policy
- Employee Code of Conduct, including low-level concerns

These policies are further explained through the induction process and formal induction meetings.

#### Ongoing training

All staff who work with children read Part 1 and Annex B of the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education and their understanding of the content is confirmed through training activities. All staff, including volunteers and freelance staff receive training or information about safeguarding including Prevent on appointment and at least annually thereafter. Onsite staff who do not work directly with children such as accounts teams and grounds staff read Annex A of the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Training for staff includes Prevent Awareness to reduce the risk of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism, online safety training and level 1 safeguarding training which includes training on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Training relating to child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation is also included. Level 1 safeguarding training is updated at least every three years. DSLs undergo additional training as detailed further in this policy.

Safeguarding training is an item on all SLT meeting agendas and is always discussed at management and team meetings. It is covered in supervisions within the EYFS and regular updates are also issued by memo, in staff newsletters or in meetings, including monthly 7-minute briefings which are emailed to all staff members.

#### DSL Training

The DSLs are trained at Level 3 (inter-agency working) and training takes place at least every two years. In addition to standard DSL training, all DSLs have also undertaken Safer Recruitment, WRAP and multi-agency training. The safeguarding training log for all DSLs and for the company is available on request.

## **MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING**

The Proprietorial Body, Company Directors, Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team work together to develop and maintain a culture of safety. The team manage and review safeguarding procedures to ensure that they always act in the best interest of the child, comply with all duties under legislation, ensure staff are competent to carry out their duties relating to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, create a supportive environment for staff and ensuring practitioners have regular supervision meetings and/or appraisals.

### Proprietor's role

The proprietor facilitates a whole school and nursery approach to safeguarding and child protection which includes everyone working at the school and nursery and ensures safeguarding and child protection underpins all we do. They ensure that all members of the Senior Leadership Team have received appropriate safeguarding and child protection training to provide the skills and knowledge to support the delivery of the school and nursery's safeguarding approach. The proprietor also ensures DSLs have the appropriate status within the organisation to carry out their role. They ensure safer recruitment procedures are embedded and effective across the school and nursery. They ensure measures are in place for children to be taught how to keep themselves and others safe. The proprietor is aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In addition, the proprietor works with the SLT to ensure online safety including filtering and monitoring is a constant running theme throughout safeguarding staff training, child education and DSL responsibilities.

### DSLs and their role

The main responsibilities of the DSLs are to:

- Advise on the most appropriate course of action, taking prompt action to make contact with Children's Social Care when required and the Police if the issue is a criminal matter
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals eg CSAP, LADO and to operate in line with locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- Collate and maintain confidential records
- Raise awareness of safeguarding across the school and EYFS, including in online safety
- Ensure staff are kept aware of child protection procedures
- Keep up to date with regulations and national guidance

More specific detail can be found in the DSL job description in appendix 4.

The Lead DSL keeps a record of all staff and volunteer safeguarding training and updates, including annual updates and those in response to changing national guidance.

### Annual Review

An annual safeguarding action plan is completed as part of the whole company development plan and this policy and all associated policies, procedures and practices are reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team.

Company Director Sarah Carr has overall responsibility for overseeing safeguarding. An annual review of safeguarding policies, procedures, practice, action plans and record keeping is undertaken by the director in the Autumn term. As part of this review the following are considered:

- DSL job descriptions, training and responsibilities, including coverage of the DSL role out of normal working hours.
- Ensuring the child's best interests are at the heart of all systems, policies and processes.
- Staff and volunteer induction and ongoing safeguarding training, including that of DSLs.
- Staff knowledge, understanding and execution of safeguarding policies and procedures
- Records relating to company safeguarding procedures including the maintenance of the CPOMS system, safer recruitment and parental contact details
- Steps being taken to 'listen' to pupils and how they can make their views known.
- Number of referrals to children's service in respect of the promotion of welfare and any identified themes emerging for future action.
- Any specific themes or issues emerging in the school such as FGM, online safety, radicalisation and any action taken as a result.
- The single central register, including arrangements for temporary staff and volunteers.
- How children are being taught about safeguarding as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- How any 'looked after children' have their individual needs assessed and the effectiveness of joint working with the relevant authorities.
- Adherence to the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

A written record is produced and notes, findings and actions recorded. A written summary of this annual review is shared with the DSLs who implement any actions. The written summary is then shared with all employees and volunteers.

### Staff Concerns about Safeguarding Practice

If a member of staff, student, freelance or peripatetic teacher, supply staff or volunteer has concerns about safeguarding practice at Ashbridge being poor or unsafe, or if they feel there are potential failures in the company's safeguarding procedures they should raise their concerns with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will always take their concerns seriously. The company Whistleblowing policy may be used for these concerns.

## **OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING**

### Information sharing

Information sharing between practitioners, external agencies and relevant professionals is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. When necessary, information is shared as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

Although staff must adhere to the regulations set out through our Privacy Notice, GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 regarding sharing of personal information, it is important to note that information can always be shared if it relates to promoting the welfare and protecting the safety of children, including their educational outcomes. This includes the sharing of sensitive and personal data which can be shared without consent where there is good reason to do so or when doing so will enhance the safeguarding of a child but it is not possible or safe to gain consent. Equally, there may be rare occasions where it is in the child's best interests to withhold certain information.

We take part in Operation Encompass in conjunction with Lancashire Constabulary to ensure we are aware of any domestic abuse incidents in which a child in our care has been involved, witnessed or heard. Lancashire Constabulary will inform the school via an email to a dedicated inbox as soon as they have been made aware of or attended a domestic abuse incident involving children in any way to ensure school can provide any support needed to the child and family. This is currently a school only initiative and the company Key Encompass Adult is Charlotte Bingham Brindle, DSL.

Any records of allegations of abuse will be kept for duration of the independent enquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal retirement age or 10 years after the allegation, whichever is longer.

Procedures relating to sharing information when a child moves on from Ashbridge Independent School and Nursery to a different setting is detailed in the section entitled 'Concerns About a Child'.

### Online Safety and the Use of Mobile Technology including Camera Use

The Technology and Online Safety policy sets out responsibilities around online safety, including the proprietor's responsibilities and details how we work to keep children and safe online, based around 'content, contact, conduct and commerce' areas of risk. This includes a focus on online safety in the curriculum, and providing information to parents and acting on any safeguarding concerns relating to online safety. We also provide guidance for children and parents to keep safe online at home. As technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and ever changing, it is more important than ever that all

staff, parents and children have a good understanding of the role technology can play in safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

Technology used by children in school has suitable restrictions and safeguards set up to protect children when working online. Staff are trained to have an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

Mobile phones are not permitted to be used on site except in mobile phone zones or for taking photos for personal use at parent events once approved by the SLT. Staff are not permitted to have their personal mobile devices about their person in classrooms or around children and all photographs must be taken using company cameras or devices which must not be taken home by any member of staff. On trips away from the settings, school staff and nursery managers may carry their personal mobile phone for emergency use only. Members of the Senior Leadership Team, School Leadership Team and Nursery Management Team may have their mobile phones about their person in the event of a Lockdown or Fire Drill for emergency communication. They may also take their phones into areas used by children in the case of medical incidents where the emergency services need to be contacted. Staff receive training and guidance relating to the safe use of mobile technology and sign an Acceptable Use Policy which sets guidelines and expectations of their conduct when using technology.

#### Teaching Children How to Keep Themselves and Others Safe

Children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe through a broad and balanced curriculum in both nursery and school; including relationships education, personal safety and online safety. Children of different ages are taught about safeguarding in different ways and a personalised approach is considered where necessary, such as for vulnerable children or those with additional needs.

We recognise that good preventative education helps prepare children for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero-tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. By integrating preventative safeguarding throughout the curriculum from the earliest age and having a strong a robust personal development programme in school, we can be confident that our children grow to become tolerant, respectful and understanding individuals.

#### Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

Due to children who are looked after being more likely to require support, there is a separate policy relating to looked after children. This policy includes details on how looked after children and their carers and families can be supported.

### Children potentially at greater risk of harm

It is important that everyone working with children, whether paid staff, student, supply staff or volunteer, recognise that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and that any child, irrespective of their background, culture, gender, disability, religion, family make up, or any other consideration, could be a safeguarding concern.

However, we recognise that there are some groups who may be more vulnerable to safeguarding issues, both online and offline. This includes but is not exclusively:

- Children who need a social worker and are on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans
- Children requiring mental health support
- Children and babies who are non-communicative
- Children with disabilities or specific additional needs
- Children with special educational needs and specific medical or physical health conditions
- Young carers
- Children in a challenging family circumstance, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Children who frequently go missing from care or home
- Children in care or who have recently returned home to their family from care
- Members of the LGBT+ community

### One to one Teaching

In some cases, such as individual music lessons or tutoring, one to one teaching may take place. In these situations, staff are always in an area that is regularly accessed by other staff and children, as CCTV, and wherever possible can be seen from another room. Staff who do engage in one-to-one teaching are advised on safe practices to follow, including avoiding physical contact wherever possible and positioning themselves in the room or area where they can be seen by others.

### Remote Education

In the event of school children being educated at home, or nursery children having communications sent home, the home learning policy will be followed to ensure all learning and communications are safe for both the children and staff team. Staff will work closely with parents to reinforce the importance of keeping children safe online and will share all learning requirements with parents so they can monitor their child's online activity during remote education.

#### External bodies and individuals using the site

We do not let our sites to external organisations out of hours and individuals are not permitted on site out of hours, unless on work business. However, should there be an exception to this and any organisation or individual was using the school and nursery site, they would be required to report any safeguarding concerns to the school and joint investigations would take place.

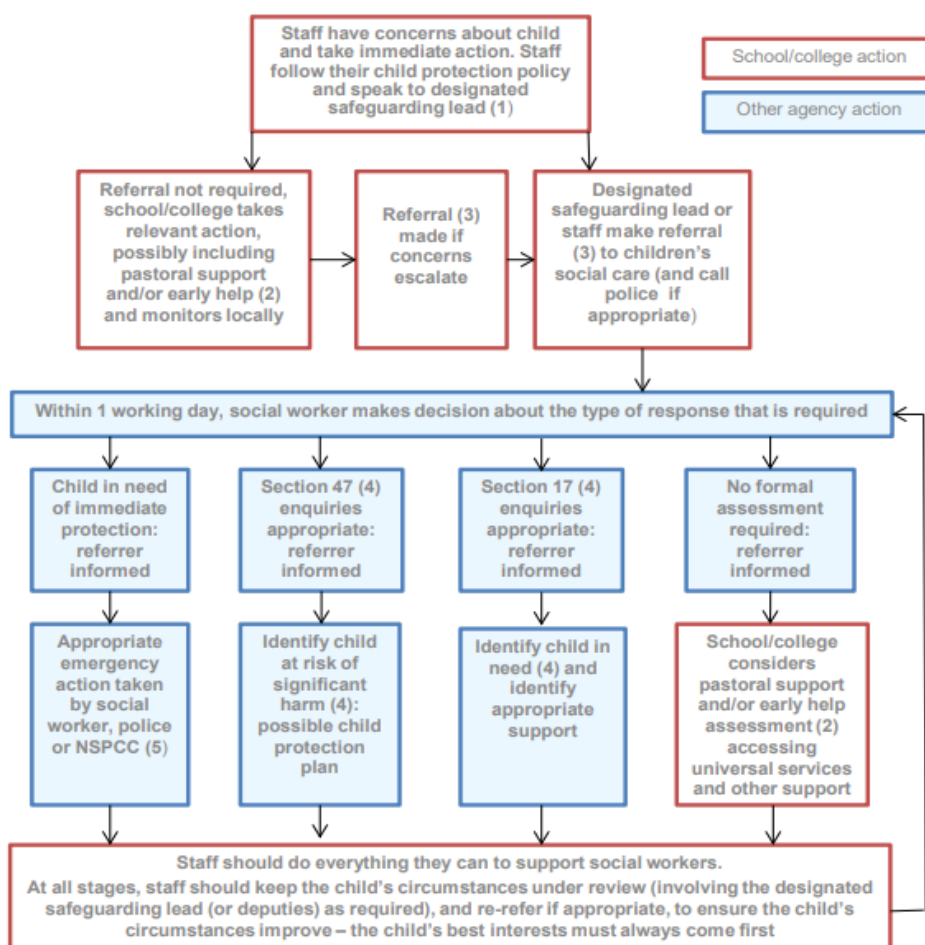


## **APPENDIX 1- List of government guidance referred to and/or followed**

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002 Section 175 (Regulatory Compliance – ISSRs and Minimum Standards for EYFS)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023
- What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused March 2015
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
- 'Prevent' Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance July 2021
- Children Missing Education September 2016
- Child Sexual Exploitation February 2017
- Mental Health and Behaviours in School November 2018
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019
- Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) [www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk)
- Statutory EYFS Framework September 2021
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014
- Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers February 2022
- General Data Protection Regulations / Data Protection Act 2018
- When to Call the Police – National Police Chief's Council

## APPENDIX 2 – Referral Flowchart (taken from KCSIE September 2023)

### Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

(2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

## APPENDIX 3 – General Advice for Staff

Key points for all staff to remember

- Be vigilant
- Listen to children and observe their body language
- Observe changes in behaviours, attitude or home situation
- Complete internal recording procedures such as CPOMS records accurately and in a timely manner
- Respond to specific concerns at an early stage
- Report concerns to the appropriate designated professionals
- Do not conduct investigations but refer on to the appropriate people or external agencies
- Be prepared to whistle blow where there are concerns about colleagues or volunteers
- Recognise the potential for child on child abuse
- Understand the potential for abuse, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation through online communications
- Follow procedures for reporting children missing from education

Advice for listening to children

A child making a disclosure is likely to be a difficult time for both you and the child. They may not realise their experiences are harmful or may not know how or when to disclose their experiences. It is important to remember that the child has chosen you to speak to and it is essential that you let them speak, whenever or wherever you are. Below are some pointers:

### **DO:**

Listen to the child.

Make notes on what they say, straight after the disclosure has taken place. Include dates and time and as much word-for-word information as you can but don't ask them to repeat things unless absolutely necessary.

Provide comfort to the child and tell them it is not their fault.

Listen quietly, carefully and patiently – even if it takes a long time.

Get another member of staff to remove other children from the area if you can do so without disturbing the child's disclosure.

Tell the child that you may have to tell other people what they have said.

Refer to the DSL immediately.

**DON'T:**

Promise to keep a secret.

Act with shock or dismay – this may stop the child from saying any more.

Ask leading questions or make suggestions about what they may have seen or might have happened.

Try to solve the problem yourself.

Destroy your notes if you then write the disclosure up more neatly.

Discuss the case with anyone other than the DSL or relevant external agencies.

Make the child feel as though they are causing a problem by reporting their concerns.

Remember that the DSLs and DSPs are there to offer support to you as well as the child. If you are feeling upset or affected in any way after a child has made a disclosure to you, speak to a DSL or DSP who can offer you guidance and refer you to further support if necessary.

## **APPENDIX 4 – DSL Job Description**

Ashbridge School and Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

### **Summary of the role: Designated Senior Lead (DSL)**

- To take lead responsibility for all safeguarding and child protection matters, including online safety and filtering and monitoring arising at the School or Nursery and to support all other staff in dealing with any child protection concerns that arise;

- To be given the time, funding, training, resources, status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources, and where appropriate, supporting and directing other staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;

- Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children for whom you are responsible and with whom you come into contact;

- To be available for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns

- to act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with the relevant agencies. Raising awareness of safeguarding issues;

- ensure the school's child protection policy and the implementation of it, is reviewed at least annually, is up to date and liaise with the directors as part of their review about this;

implement Operation Encompass and work with families to ensure they are aware of the initiative and the reason for it;

- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly via the website;

- ensure that parents are aware that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made to children's social care and the school's role in this (see Welcome Pack and enrolment form)

- maintain links with the Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) to ensure staff are aware of training opportunities and the local policies on safeguarding ; and

- where children leave the Nursery or School ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school/setting in line with local procedures as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Share information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues of vulnerable children with staff to help them to promote educational outcomes, identify challenges and make adjustments and create and maintain a culture of high aspirations for these children.

## **Main duties and responsibilities:**

### Managing referrals

To take lead responsibility for:

- referring all cases of suspected abuse of any pupil at the School and Nursery to children's social care;
- supporting staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- referring to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) team all child protection concerns which involve a member of staff;
- as required, liaise with the case manager and the designated officer at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member);
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or to supporting other staff to do so and to contribute to the assessment of children;
- referring cases to the Channel programme (and supporting staff who make referrals) where there is a radicalisation concern;
- making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed or resigns in circumstances where there has been actual harm, or risk of harm, to a child;
- making referrals to the police where a crime may have been committed which involves a child.
- ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to effect secure transit and for obtaining confirmation of receipt from the new school/setting.
- identifying and respond to mental health concerns which are also related to safeguarding, including record keeping and making referrals
- ensuring an appropriate adult is always present when the Police are involved with a child

Preventing radicalisation in accordance with the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales and Channel Duty Guidance:

Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2015) the DSL has the following responsibilities:

acting as the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and support staff and external agencies in all matters relating to the Prevent Duty;

- co-ordinating Prevent Duty procedures in the school;
- undergoing appropriate training on the Prevent Duty such as the Home Office 'Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent' (WRAP) training;

- undergoing appropriate training on the Channel programme;
- assessing the training needs of all School staff in relation to the Prevent Duty and implementing and maintaining an ongoing training programme for staff including induction training for all newly appointed staff and volunteers;
- maintaining an ongoing training programme on the Prevent Duty for all staff including induction training for all new employees and keeping records of staff training;
- monitoring the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to the Prevent Duty;
- liaising with local Prevent co-ordinators, the police and local authorities and existing multi-agency forums in all necessary or appropriate circumstance relating to the Prevent Duty.

### **Line management duties and responsibilities**

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead will have line management responsibility for the other DSLs and other relevantly trained members of the Nursery Management Team.
- The DSLs should receive appropriate child protection training every two years (and refresh their knowledge and skills through network meetings, email updates and documents on an ongoing basis) in order to:

understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;

- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the School and Nursery's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff, freelance teachers and volunteers
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- understand and support the school with regard to the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.