



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

September 2026



Approved by Governing Body on: 28th September 2026

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Head Teacher: Kate Hazelwood

Date of Review: July 2027

Vision Statement

We aim to create a
safe, happy and
nurturing
environment for all
our children!

Mission Statement

The Orchard School
strives to provide the
best quality teaching
and learning with an
inclusive and
personalised
curriculum, where all
achievements are
celebrated.

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Key Contacts in School

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1. Introduction

This document is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for The Orchard School and any extended services that it provides.

This policy applies to all staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors and volunteers, temporary and supply/visiting staff working in the school. It will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body and is in line with the expectations of Ofsted and the requirements of the Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. This policy has due regard for Keeping children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together 2026.

The Orchard School is a Primary Special School, providing education for children aged 4-11 years with a range of complex needs. All pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and may present with learning difficulties, communication needs, social, emotional and mental health needs, autism, and/or additional medical needs.

As a school within Sandwell, we work closely with local safeguarding partners and Children's Social Care. However, some of our pupils live in, or are placed by, neighbouring local authorities including Birmingham, Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton. It is therefore essential that all staff understand that safeguarding concerns and referrals may need to be reported in accordance with the procedures of the relevant local authority responsible for the child.

The school will maintain effective links with Sandwell Children's Trust and safeguarding partners, while the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs will ensure they remain up to date with safeguarding procedures and referral pathways across neighbouring local authorities where our pupils reside.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy forms part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities. The principles within this policy should be read alongside and given due regard in relation to a range of linked policies, including but not limited to:

- Acceptable Use of Technologies within Online safety policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Mobile Phone Usage Policy
- Offsite and Out-Of-Hours Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Personal and Intimate Care Policy
- PSHE Policy (contains relationships and Health Education)
- Safe Touch Protocol

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Drug and Substance Misuse Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Any other relevant policies as defined by statutory guidance and the school's Governing Body.

At The Orchard School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. We recognise that our pupils may be particularly vulnerable due to their individual needs and circumstances. We aim to create a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where children feel secure, valued and able to achieve their full potential.

The Orchard School aims to ensure that:

- All staff; governors, volunteers and visitors understand their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.
- Staff are appropriately trained to recognise indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and know how to respond to concerns.
- Children are protected from harm and receive timely support, guidance and intervention when concerns arise.
- Concerns about a child's welfare are identified, recorded and reported promptly and effectively.
- Safeguarding practice is child-centred and takes account of the views, wishes and feelings of the child.
- Effective working relationships are maintained with parents, carers, safeguarding partners and relevant agencies to promote the welfare of children.
- A culture of vigilance is embedded throughout the school, ensuring safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

2. Purpose of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2.1. Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

The Orchard School follows the procedures agreed by Sandwell's Children's Safeguarding Partnership. We recognise the important role we play in Sandwell's children's Safeguarding Partnership Multi Agency Arrangements. We demonstrate our compliance with these arrangements via the annual S175/157 Safeguarding Audit.

2.2. School Staff and Volunteers

School staff incl. supply, volunteers and students are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation. The school will therefore:

- Ensure all staff, governors and Trustees receive safeguarding and child protection training including online safety at induction and at least annually thereafter to help identify concerns in accordance with 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners' (DfE 2015).
- All staff/volunteers/agency/temporary staff and volunteers will be made aware of policies including child protection, staff code of conduct, whistleblowing and acceptable use of technologies including social media as part of their induction.
- Ensure that all staff is aware of this policy and those relating to the safeguarding of children.
- All school staff will read part one Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE).
- Governors will read the whole of KCSIE Sept 2026

2.3. Principles and Expectations

This policy applies to the safeguarding of all children between the ages of 4-11 whose care and education comes within the remit of this school.

We are fully committed to the Multi Agency ST*R Practice Model principles of being Strength based, Trauma informed and Relationship based.

We operate a whole school approach to safeguarding where everyone adopts a zero tolerance to abuse. We recognise our own responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to our care by establishing a safe and trusting environment in which children can learn and develop.

We create a culture of safe recruitment and have adopted robust recruitment procedures outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 statutory guidance for schools.

The staff and Governing Body of this school are committed to establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. We will ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried and that the principles of confidentiality are made clear to children and young people.

Children's wishes and feelings are always taken in to account when determining what action is taken and included in any referrals. The school promotes a positive, supportive and secure ethos, giving pupils a sense of being valued and understanding that their voice will be heard.

The school recognises its duty of care to report safeguarding concerns when a child is at risk of harm or may be a risk of harm to others (e.g. carrying a weapon)

This school also recognises its duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and in responding to concerns about possible abuse, including the Police, Children services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, School Attendance Support Service, Inclusion Support Service and other agencies/services coming into school to support individual pupils/groups of pupils. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early/family help and contributing to any statutory assessments. School ensures that all staff understand the early/family help process and recognise the factors that make children more at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma and isolation which may be brought about by factors such as family members in prison or homelessness.

We take timely action to support early intervention if we have concerns.

We ensure that support is matched to children's individual needs.

We encourage all children and young people to respect, value and support each other.

We recognise that Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning may be targeted by others and discriminated against. This behaviour will not be tolerated, and we will ensure children and young people have a trusted adult who they can be open with.

We are fully compliant and promote Operation Encompass, which is a police and Education early intervention safeguarding partnership that supports children and young people exposed to Domestic Abuse. It aims to ensure Schools are notified in a timely manner of any Domestic Abuse incident where child/ren are present. This includes undertaking the Key Adult online Training and ensuring all parents/carers are aware we are part of this initiative via newsletters, prospectus, school website and induction.

We recognise that children who experience, see or hear domestic abuse in all its forms are victims and appropriate support will be offered.

We ensure that appropriate, robust Filtering and Monitoring is in place on all school devices and networks, which are regularly reviewed at least annually to assess their effectiveness.

We are aware of the influence of harmful extreme ideologies (political hatred, misogyny etc) both online and in the real world. We will promote tolerance for all, healthy relationships and tackle extreme views in line with local procedures and Government guidance.

We aim to meet the DfE filtering monitoring standards and the Cyber Security standards for schools and colleges to build cyber resilience.

We ensure that children who are subject to multi-agency plans are supported by the school as defined in that plan.

We are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children we care for and care experienced young people.

To develop and deliver the PSHE curriculum to create opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm including Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA), Harm Outside The Home (HOTH) including Child exploitation (sexual and criminal), Modern day slavery, Serious violence, Trafficking, Gangs and knife Crime, Radicalisation, Female Genital mutilation (FGM), Honour based Violence (HBV) and Forced Marriage (FM), Online/Social Media Safety, extreme ideologies. They will be supported to calculate risk and be made aware of the range of support available to them.

To ensure staff are aware that wider environmental factors could be present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Harm outside the home (Extra-familial harms) takes a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) online grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. This is known as Assessment of Risk outside the family Home, and we will have due consideration for this when assessing risks to children and young people.

As part of our teaching and learning we may use Generative AI and as such use guidance produced by the DfE to ensure we do this safely and effectively.

We are familiar and keep up to date with legislation and guidance that relates to children and young people such as the legislative changes to the legal age of marriage in England and Wales.

We encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils

To contribute to children being healthy, safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

To support the mental health and well-being of students and be able to identify when there are needs and consider when they become a safeguarding issue. We will follow referral processes to gain the support required to help keep the child safe.

The school will ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus. The school's child protection policy is made available to parents on request and published on the school website.

Our policy extends to any establishment our school commissions to deliver education to our pupils/students on our behalf including alternative provision settings.

We will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of any pupil placed in Alternative Provision and ensure we are satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil.

Our Governing Body will ensure that any commissioned agency will reflect the values, philosophy and standards of our school. Ongoing monitoring will be undertaken.

When our premises are used for activities/services offered by other organisations or individuals' confirmation will be sought by the school that appropriate risk assessments, aligned with 'Keeping Children Safe in Offsite settings', are completed, safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place. This assurance will be included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement).

2.4. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the school's child protection policy is put on the agenda of the Governing Body at least once a year for discussion, monitoring, review and renewal.

Our School submits the Local Authority annual safeguarding audit within agreed deadlines (S175/157 Education Act 2002 audit) to evidence compliance with current legislative requirements, including any implications and learning from local, regional or national safeguarding issues.

In this way the Governing Body authorises the DSL for Child Protection to carry out his/her responsibilities as outlined in the statutory Guidance.

3. West Midlands Child Protection Safeguarding Procedures

The Orchard School follows the West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures, which provide a framework for safeguarding practice and inter-agency working across the region. These procedures support the school's responsibilities for identifying, reporting and responding to concerns about the safety and welfare of children and young people. All safeguarding practice within the school is informed by these procedures, alongside statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The DSL will be familiar with the relevant West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and to follow them when responding to concerns about a child's welfare or when making referrals to children's social care and other safeguarding partners.

Use the link to the contents page to access the different sections of the regional procedures – Statutory Child Protection Procedures; Regional Safeguarding Guidance; Local Area Specific Safeguarding Information and Procedures.

<https://westmids.trixonline.co.uk/>



4. Our Pupils

All pupils at The Orchard School have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Research shows that children and young people with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation than their peers. As a result, all staff must be aware of the additional risks that some pupils may face and remain vigilant to signs and indicators of harm.

Factors that may increase a pupil's vulnerability include:

- The need for support with intimate or personal care.
- Communication differences or difficulties that may affect a pupil's ability to recognise, understand or report concerns.

- The potential for signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation, such as changes in behaviour, mood or presentation, to be incorrectly attributed to a pupil's SEND rather than appropriately explored.
- Increased social isolation or limited friendship networks.
- Greater dependence on adults for care, support and decision-making.
- Additional pressures experienced by families and carers in meeting a child's complex needs.

Our primary learning aims, which underpin all personalised Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), are to increase pupils' independence and enable them to communicate their needs, wishes and feelings using the most appropriate form of communication for them. Safeguarding therefore underpins all aspects of teaching and learning, recognising that communication difficulties and dependence on others are factors that can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse, neglect and exploitation.

At The Orchard School, we recognise that effective communication is fundamental to safeguarding. We are committed to ensuring that every pupil can communicate their wishes, feelings and concerns in ways that are meaningful to them. We will take reasonable steps to reduce communication barriers and ensure that safeguarding information, support and opportunities to seek help are accessible to all pupils.

This may include:

- The use of Makaton and other augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems.
- The use of signs, symbols, visual supports and social stories.
- Appropriate assistive and communication technologies.
- Regular staff training in communication, SEND and safeguarding.
- Access to specialist services and agencies where appropriate.
- Building trusted, positive relationships with pupils so that they feel safe, understood and confident to share concerns.

All staff will maintain a culture of professional curiosity and recognise the importance of listening to, recording and responding appropriately to concerns relating to pupils with SEND. Any concerns will be acted upon promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

We are committed to acting in the best interests of every child. Through a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, in ways that are appropriate to their individual needs, communication styles and developmental understanding. We recognise that safeguarding education will look different for different pupils.

Children are supported to identify situations that may place them at risk, understand and manage risks, develop strategies to help keep themselves safe, communicate concerns and seek support from trusted adults when needed. Our approach is designed to empower pupils to recognise risks they may encounter and, with support from staff, understand how those risks can be reduced or managed. Discussions about risk are intended to build confidence, resilience and independence rather than fear or anxiety.

Children are taught how to conduct themselves and behave responsibly through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Relationships Education, Health Education and through all aspects of school life. Pupils are regularly taught about online safety, including the risks associated with sharing content, information and images online, safe use of technology, and how to recognise and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying.

We actively promote healthy and safe relationships and model respectful behaviour throughout the school. Staff consistently seek pupil consent where appropriate and provide opportunities for pupils to make choices and develop independence in line with their age, understanding and individual needs.

At The Orchard School, we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment where every pupil is valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential. We strive to foster a culture in which pupils feel secure, listened to and empowered to express their views, wishes and feelings.

We provide opportunities for pupils to develop independence and make choices that are appropriate to their age, understanding and individual needs. We recognise the importance of pupil voice and ensure that every pupil is given the support they need to communicate their thoughts, experiences and concerns.

The school continually promotes an ethos of respect and inclusion. Pupils are encouraged to communicate with a trusted adult of their choosing about any worries or concerns they may have and are supported to do so using their preferred method of communication.

We promote a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence, sexual harassment, bullying, sexism, misogyny, misandry, racism, homophobia, transphobia and all forms of discriminatory behaviour. These principles are reinforced throughout the curriculum, assemblies, daily interactions and wider school life. When applying this approach, staff will take appropriate account of each pupil's individual needs, developmental stage, communication abilities and level of understanding, while maintaining clear expectations regarding safety, dignity and respect for others.

All pupils will be taken seriously and treated with respect when they share worries, seek support or raise concerns. Staff will listen carefully, respond sensitively and take appropriate action in line with the school's safeguarding procedures whenever concerns are raised.

4.1 Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all our pupils receive equal protection, we give special consideration to children who are:

- homeless
- disabled or have special educational needs (NB. This would constitute all of our students and therefore ALL must be considered to be 'particularly vulnerable')
- Young Carers
- Looked After Children
- Previously Looked After Children
- Adopted Children
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse, or parental mental health needs (known as Trio of Vulnerabilities or The Toxic Trio)
- asylum seekers
- experiencing mental health concerns
- have experienced multiple suspensions, [are] at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation and/or criminal exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage and honour-based abuse
- susceptible to being drawn into extremism
- absent or missing from education

4.2 Children who are absent from education

All staff at The Orchard School should be aware that children who are absent from school, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, may be at increased risk of a range of safeguarding concerns. These may include abuse or neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, involvement in county lines, mental health difficulties, substance misuse, radicalisation, travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'honour'-based abuse or forced marriage.

Early intervention is essential to identify any underlying safeguarding risks, ensure children receive appropriate support and help prevent them from becoming missing from education. The Orchard School will follow up on unexplained absences with parents and carers and take appropriate safeguarding action where concerns arise. We will pay particular attention to children who are repeatedly or persistently absent, in line with the school's safeguarding and attendance procedures.

To support this process, the school will maintain at least two up-to-date contact telephone numbers for each pupil's parents or carers, wherever possible. Parents and carers are asked to inform the school as soon as possible of any changes to their contact details to ensure they can be contacted promptly regarding their child's absence or any safeguarding concerns.

All staff must be familiar with the school's procedures for managing unauthorised absence and children absent from education, as set out in the Attendance Policy.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Where a parent or carer has expressed an intention to remove their child from The Orchard School with a view to educating them at home, the school will work with the local authority and other relevant professionals to coordinate a meeting with the parents or carers, wherever possible, before a final decision is made.

The purpose of this meeting is to ensure that parents and carers have considered the implications of elective home education and what is in the child's best interests. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability (SEND), has a social worker, or is otherwise considered vulnerable.

The school will work with the local authority and relevant professionals to identify and consider any safeguarding concerns, ensure that the child's individual needs are taken into account and support an appropriate transition where elective home education is pursued.

The Orchard School will have regard to the Department for Education's Elective home education guidance for local authorities, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and their powers to engage with parents and carers. Although the guidance is primarily aimed at local authorities, the school recognises the importance of being familiar with it and working collaboratively with the local authority to safeguard children.

4.3 Pupils with a Social Worker, and Looked After and Previously Looked After children

The Orchard School recognises that pupils may require the support of a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare concerns. Experiences of adversity and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm and may create barriers to school attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work collaboratively with social workers and other relevant professionals to safeguard and support vulnerable pupils. Where the school is aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will take this into account when making decisions about the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This will include decisions relating to responses to unauthorised absence or missing education where safeguarding risks are known, and the provision of appropriate pastoral and/or academic support.

The Orchard School will ensure that staff have the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to safeguard and support looked-after and previously looked-after children. Relevant staff will have access to appropriate information about a looked-after child's legal status, care arrangements and contact arrangements with birth parents or others who hold parental responsibility. The DSL will maintain details of children's social workers and relevant Virtual School Heads (VSHs), as appropriate.

Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

The Orchard School has appointed Lauren Petrie (Assistant Headteacher) as the designated teacher responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, in accordance with statutory guidance. The designated teacher has appropriate training, qualifications and experience to fulfil this role.

The designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that safeguarding concerns relating to looked-after and previously looked-after children are identified and responded to promptly and effectively.
- Work with Virtual School Heads and other relevant professionals to promote the educational achievement, progress and wellbeing of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Contribute to the development, implementation and review of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for looked-after children, ensuring that educational support reflects each pupil's individual needs.
- Liaise with the Virtual School Head and relevant professionals to consider how Pupil Premium Plus funding can be used effectively to support looked-after children and address the needs identified within their PEPs.

The DSL and designated teacher will work collaboratively to ensure that looked-after and previously looked-after children receive appropriate safeguarding, educational and pastoral support, enabling them to feel safe, access learning and achieve their potential.

4.4 Homelessness

The Orchard School recognises that being homeless or being at risk of homelessness can have a significant impact on a child's safety, welfare and wellbeing. Homelessness is not limited to people sleeping rough; the legal definition is broader and includes circumstances where a family may not have suitable or secure accommodation or may be at risk of losing their home.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, insecure accommodation or being asked to leave their property. Staff should remain alert to these indicators and report any concerns about a child's housing circumstances to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will be familiar with the contact details and referral pathways for the Local Housing Authority so that concerns can be raised and progressed at the earliest opportunity. Where appropriate, the school will work with the Local Housing Authority and other relevant agencies to help families access advice, support and assistance to prevent homelessness.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places duties on English local authorities to provide assistance to eligible people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This includes assessing an individual's circumstances and needs, developing a personalised housing plan where applicable, and taking reasonable steps to help prevent or relieve homelessness. Early identification and referral can help families access support before their housing situation reaches crisis point.

Referrals to, or discussions with, the Local Housing Authority do not replace a referral to children's social care where a child has been harmed or is considered to be at risk of harm. The school will follow its safeguarding and child protection procedures and make referrals to the appropriate agencies whenever necessary, ensuring that the child's safety and welfare remain the priority.

5. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2026\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2026\)](#), and the [Maintained schools governance guide](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership. <https://www.sandwellcsp.org.uk/>

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#) [Children Act 1989](#) & [The Children Act 2004](#)
- [Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership - Inter Agency Procedures](#) – regional Procedures
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Information Sharing Duty 2026](#)
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- [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools: Departmental Advice](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#).
- [Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(2015\)](#)
- [The Prevent Duty](#)
- [Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)
- [Forced Marriage \(Civil Protection\) Act 2007 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) – The legal age of marriage in England and Wales is 18 years Old
- [Child and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [General Data Protection Legislation \(2018\)](#)
- [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#)
- [Relationships education and Health education](#)
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)
- [Voyeurism Offences Act 2019](#)
- [DfE statutory guidance on Children Missing Education](#)

Additional links to Resources/ Information (Child – on – Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, Generative AI in education, Gender questioning children : Relationships, sex and health education) can be found in KCSIE 2026.

6. Terminology

6.1. Key Safeguarding Terms

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by the Department for Education as:

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

Child protection: is part of safeguarding and refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse: is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. *Appendix A explains the different types of abuse.*

The four main categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse: causing physical harm to a child such as hitting, shaking, burning, or deliberately inducing illness.

Emotional Abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatments leading to severe adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Sexual Abuse: Forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, including physical contact or non-contact activities like producing abusive images.

Neglect: Is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. *Appendix A defines neglect in more detail.*

Child/Children means everyone under the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, including stepparents, foster carers, special guardians and adoptive parents.

Staff refers to all individuals working in or on behalf of the school, including employees, supply staff, volunteers, contractors and agency staff.

6.2. Designated Safeguarding Roles

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): All schools must have a senior member of staff who has experience and training regarding safeguarding children and oversees safeguarding processes and procedures in school.

6.3. Local Safeguarding Arrangements (Sandwell)

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): This is the single point of contact within Sandwell for safeguarding referrals and concerns.

Multi-agency referral form (MARF): The form used to make referrals to children's social care.

Safeguarding partners: The 3 main safeguarding partners in Sandwell are: Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) (with Sandwell Children's Trust delivering services on their behalf), Sandwell Integrated Care Board, and West Midlands Police. The Partnership works in consultation with the other partners as relevant agencies; such as health providers, schools and education settings, probation providers, the voluntary/community sector, and other providers. Together this is referred to as the **Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership**.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1. The Head Teacher

The Headteacher is responsible (with the lead support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) for ensuring safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively in school. This includes:

- Having the overarching responsibility of ensuring the effectiveness of our school safeguarding arrangements as outlined in this policy.
- Being accountable and reporting to the Governing Body (with the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) on the effectiveness of school safeguarding arrangements.
- Supporting and promoting a whole school safeguarding culture and ethos as outlined in this policy. This includes ensuring that the Senior Leadership Team work effectively together and with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to ensure a whole school approach to safeguarding.
- Take the lead role in Ensuring Safe Practice; including ensuring staff are knowledgeable and confident in their safeguarding practice; including making sure that their practice is in line with national and local requirements. The Headteacher is also the lead person responsible for receiving, managing, and referring to/liasing with the Local Authority Designated Officer (with the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead) or any other authorities regarding allegations of abuse made against staff or other organisations/individual who use school premises.
- Enabling the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputy(ies) to carry out their roles effectively. This means ensuring they are given sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary.
- Ensuring that all school policies including safeguarding policies and procedures and those required to be in place, are implemented and followed by all staff.

7.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection co-ordinates action on child protection within the school. This includes ensuring that all staff, teaching and non-teaching (including supply staff) know who the Designated Member of Staff is and that they are aware of their individual responsibility to be alert to the signs of abuse and should consider the context within which specific safeguarding issues within the wider environment (Assessment of Risk outside the family Home) – see *appendix A* to discuss any concerns with the Designated Member of Staff. That they are aware of what happens once a concern has been raised.

Lauren Petrie is the DSL for Child Protection and is a member of the senior leadership team.

A Deputy DSL has been appointed to act in the absence/unavailability of the DSL. Whilst the activities of the safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection for safeguarding and child protection remains with the safeguarding lead. This responsibility is not delegated.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for Child Protection in this school are:

Allison Shepherd, Laura Valentine, Amy Corey, Rebecca Edwards, Carrie Dudfield and Louisa Stevens.

In the absence of the DSL and the deputy DSL the most senior member of staff in school will assume responsibility for any child protection matters that arise. Any deputies will be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).
- Take lead responsibility for the implementation of the safeguarding policy, ensuring all staff, volunteers are aware of the content and expectations of the policy.
- Will receive refresher Safeguarding lead training at least every two years.
- Will keep their knowledge and skills up to date (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads) at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up to date with any developments relevant to their role.
- Ensure that all staff (including supply, volunteers) who work with children undertakes appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children at induction and at least every two years with regular updates at least annually. Training will enable them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse including Online Safety Including abuse/Grooming, understanding expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) with knowledge of what is controlling behaviours and coercive control, Child to Parent Domestic abuse, Child to child abuse (including harassment and violence), Child exploitation, Spiritual abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour based Violence (HBV) and Forced Marriage (FM).
- Ensure that all staff understand the statutory duty to report to police when they suspect a child has had FGM carried out on a girl under 18.
- Ensure all staff understand the PREVENT Duty.
- Ensure that parents and staff are aware the school is part of Operation Encompass by providing full information around school, within parental information and on the school website.
- Ensure there are effective induction and ongoing monitoring procedures around safeguarding and child protection for all adults working in the school, be they staff or volunteers, including supply agency staff which are to be undertaken no longer than 10 working days of commencement of their contract.
- Make sure that concerns are raised by staff/volunteers when necessary.
- Offer support and guidance to all adults working within the school on matters of safeguarding and child protection.
- Ensure that the names and contact details of the DSL/Deputy are on display for all staff, parents, pupils and visitors to the school.
- Ensure that (whenever possible) the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are not out of school (e.g. at training events) at the same time. If they are absent arrangements should be in place to ensure their duties are covered during their absence.
- Ensure that the telephone number for the Contact Centre is available and easily accessible to staff in case, for any reason, the DSL and Deputy are not contactable, to ensure there is no unwarranted delay in referral.
- Discuss concerns as required with outside agencies e.g. specific agency for single need (e.g. speech and language, Inclusion Support), early intervention multi-agency (e.g. Early/Family Help process) or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) /existing social worker (child protection/significant harm concerns).

- Be aware of contact details and referral routes to support families. This includes referral routes to local housing authority for families who are or are at risk of being homeless, referral routes for children in households where there is domestic abuse, child criminal exploitation, children missing or absent from education.
- Ensure suitable safeguarding arrangements are in place to respond to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, considering when threshold for educational neglect may be met.
- Work closely with colleagues with specific lead responsibilities in school such as Attendance officer, mental health lead, children we care for designated teacher, to respond to safeguarding concerns and improve outcomes for children.
- Work closely with partner agencies and services to improve outcomes for children and young people including (but not limited to) Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Allocated social workers, special educational needs coordinators (SENCO's), Senior mental health leads, school nurses, Domestic abuse support, Locality Strengthening Families team, community policing.
- Be aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult when they are being questioned by police regards any criminal matters. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- Complete/oversee all necessary paperwork and correspondence including request for support forms to the Early Help/Family team or MASH regarding safeguarding and child protection referrals.
- Ensure there is appropriately trained staff to lead on Targeted support and that all staff is aware of the Early/Family Help process and their role within it.
- Ensure that relevant staff are informed and advised about appropriate action when a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan.
- Ensure that the school is represented by a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in their absence one of the safeguarding team) at child protection conferences, core groups and multi-agency meetings about 'Children in Need'. If no one from school can attend apologies will be given and a written report will be submitted prior to the conference chair.
- Compile and submit a written report regarding children who are subject to child protection conferences. This will be shared with parents before the conference takes place.
- Ensure there is appropriate representation on Core Groups when a child is on a child protection plan. If the most appropriate person is a class teacher, they will work jointly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure record keeping is detailed.
- Ensure that welfare records are kept securely and confidentially (locked and with limited access).
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection records are chronologically recorded, with significant incidents or events clearly highlighted. These records should be reviewed regularly and focus on outcomes for the child/children.
- Ensure that records are transferred, within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term, when a child changes/transitions to a new school.
- Ensure there is a mechanism in place to support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in specific regard to their welfare responsibilities e.g. weekly/monthly one to one meeting between the Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to offer mutual support.
- Keep the school's SMT, Governors, Local Authority and SCSP informed about safeguarding and child protection issues as requested.
- Provide guidance to parents, children and staff about obtaining suitable support.
- Discuss with new parents the role of the DSL and the role of safeguarding in the school. Make parents aware of the safeguarding procedures used and how to access the safeguarding and child protection policy.
- To arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities including onsite day care provision.
- The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually

7.3. The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children in their establishment. There is a nominated governor for child protection is appointed to take lead responsibility.

The nominated governor for child protection is Helen Grindulis

The Governing Body ensures that:

- Our Governors will be subjected to an enhanced DBS check and 'Section 128' check.
- All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online to include responsibilities and expectations around filtering and monitoring) training at induction. This training equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is updated at least annually.
- Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are in place and reviewed annually.
- Obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 21, the Equality Act 2010²², (including the Public Sector Equality Duty²³), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are maintained, and any breaches are tackled appropriately. Safe recruitment procedures (including consideration for an online search on any shortlisted candidates which they will be informed about), are in place and reviewed annually
- All staff (paid and unpaid)/agency/temporary staff have an up-to-date enhanced Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) certificate. All those carrying out teaching roles will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.
- Volunteers who teach, train, instruct, care for, or supervise children on more than 3 days in any 30-day period will be classed as being in regulated activity and will have an enhanced DBS check that includes children's barred list information.
- Ongoing vigilance beyond the recruitment process to ensure safety and welfare of children is embedded in all our processes and procedures to ensure deterrent and prevention of abuse, challenges inappropriate behaviour.
- A Single Central register (SCR) is monitored to ensure it meets statutory requirements (Please see our Recruitment Policy). All staff leavers will be deleted from our current SCR.
- Position of trust procedures are in place (included the management of low-level concerns) and reviewed annually.
- A DSL who is a senior member of school leadership team is appointed and notify the LA of any changes in personnel to this role.
- The governors support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in carrying out his/her responsibilities as outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (September 2026) and role in Job Description.
- There is a dedicated teacher for Children we care for who have been appropriately trained. This staff member has a key role in promoting the educational achievement of Looked after Children and engaging with the DSL.
- A member of the Governing Body (usually the Chair) is nominated to be responsible in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Head Teacher.
- That robust policies and procedures are in place, implemented and monitored.
- Relevant safeguarding/child protection training is accessed by all school staff/volunteers according to their role and responsibilities (including online safety which, amongst other things include and understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring).
- Ensure that school adhere to the DfE Guidance - Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Monitoring and reviewing with IT staff to determine how best to support school to meet the standards.
- That they receive a termly report from the DSL regarding safeguarding/child protection work including details of early help involvement and the lead professional role which has been undertaken in the term which is shared with the LA through the 175 Audit.
- Deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay, liaising with relevant bodies for support as required.
- All governors will receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. This will include information about Prevent, CSE and FGM. It must be updated every year, with additional local updates as required.
- The governor with safeguarding responsibility will undertake additional training regarding Prevent and Neglect.
- As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they will receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

8. School Procedures - Staff Responsibilities

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) ensures that all school staff and volunteers are alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and from other sources, including members of the school community. Staff are made aware through training that pupils may not always have the ability to directly express concerns about abuse, and that changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance patterns or other indicators may suggest that a child is experiencing harm.
- The DSL will ensure all staff are aware of the school's reporting and referral procedures and the need for timely reporting.
- The Orchard School uses MyConcern to raise safeguarding concerns and maintain records of actions taken. Staff have individual logins and will be shown how to use the system as part of their induction. Some staff who do not have access to the school system, such as supply staff and visitors, may use a welfare concern sheet to record concerns. These forms are available in classrooms and offices. Support is available from class teams, line managers and the pastoral team where required. All welfare concern sheets will be transferred onto MyConcern and relevant actions recorded.
- We recognise that a child who is absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeated occasions may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), or becoming a child missing in education (CME).
- School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify risks of abuse and neglect and to help prevent future absence, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- Consideration will be given to a referral to Children's Services where there are safeguarding concerns or there has been no contact with the school. If a child ceases attending altogether, this will be reported to the Local Authority Attendance Service, together with any relevant information regarding potential off-rolling concerns.
- The school will robustly monitor the attendance of all pupils on roll in line with the school's Attendance Policy and Working Together to Improve School Attendance: Statutory Guidance (August 2024). When a safeguarding or child protection concern is raised, attendance information will be shared with partner agencies in accordance with local information-sharing protocols.
- The school will ensure systems are in place to regularly update parent/carers contact details and that at least two emergency contact numbers are held for every child on roll.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a child, the DSL (or Deputy DSL in their absence) must be informed immediately. All members of staff have an absolute responsibility to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.
- The member of staff must record information regarding the concern on MyConcern or, where necessary, on a welfare concern sheet, ensuring that the information is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, the Deputy DSL, on the same day. The record must be a clear, precise and factual account of the observations, disclosures or concerns.
- There may be emerging needs or adversities faced by children and their families that could be addressed through early help. [Sandwell's Multi Agency Threshold document](#) (available on the [SCSP Website](#)) guides us on what is the most appropriate level of support for families based on their level of need.
- The Sandwell Multi-Agency Threshold Guidance provides guidance on the most appropriate level of support for families based on their level of need. The Single Point of Contact (MASH) Education Team is also available to provide advice and support at an early stage before concerns require referral into MASH.
- The DSL will decide whether concerns should be referred to Children's Social Care via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Where a referral to Children's Social Care is deemed necessary, this will normally be discussed with parents/carers and consent sought, unless doing so would:
 - Place the child at further risk of harm;
 - Place a vulnerable adult at risk; or
 - Compromise any enquiries that may need to be undertaken.
- When concerns have been raised regarding a child, or when a child is subject to multi-agency involvement, written records will be kept securely and separately from the child's main pupil file.
- Whenever a child transfers to another school, all records, including safeguarding and child protection files, will be transferred securely to the receiving school within five working days, and relevant agencies will be informed of the child's new educational placement where appropriate.
- The DSL takes responsibility for informing the Senior Leadership Team of safeguarding trends, patterns of behaviour or emerging risks that may impact pupil welfare. Where necessary, additional staff training will be arranged.
- All staff and volunteers are made aware that the four main categories of abuse are:
 - Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Neglect

In addition to these categories, all staff will remain alert to specific safeguarding issues as outlined in *Appendix A*, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and What to Do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfE).

- All staff receive safeguarding awareness training and regular briefings so that they can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, including indicators that a child may be at risk from, or involved in, serious violence or criminal exploitation. Staff are made aware of associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage those risks, including the government guidance Advice to Schools and Colleges on Gangs and Youth Violence.
- All staff will be informed that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may involve a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Abuse may be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Staff will understand that children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse within the home and/or be subjected to abuse within their own intimate relationships, including teenage relationship abuse. Such experiences can have a significant and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.
- All staff will be informed of the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and technology to bully, groom, exploit or abuse children.
- Staff will oversee the safe use of electronic communication, devices and social media by both staff and pupils and will take immediate action where concerns arise regarding bullying, exploitation, harmful online behaviour or other risky activity.
- All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child if they present with indicators of possible significant harm. Further information can be found in *Appendix A*.
- All staff will read and understand the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026), and will review this guidance at least annually.
- All staff will understand:
 - The staff code of conduct;
 - The role and identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs;
 - The Online Safety Policy;
 - The school's safeguarding procedures; and
 - Their individual safeguarding responsibilities.
- All staff working with children will understand and implement the school's Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

8.1. Safeguarding Training and Induction

All staff will undertake safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, as part of their induction. This training will include the school's safeguarding systems, reporting and referral procedures, whistleblowing procedures and individual responsibilities to ensure that staff can recognise and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse or neglect.

All staff will receive annual safeguarding and child protection refresher training, and additional updates or training will be provided when there are significant changes to safeguarding guidance, legislation or school procedures.

Upon appointment, all new staff, students and volunteers will be allocated a mentor and shown where induction information is kept. They will be provided with a role-appropriate induction checklist identifying the documents they are required to read and understand. All staff will be required to read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the Whistleblowing Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and other relevant safeguarding documentation, as outlined in the school's Induction Policy.

Staff will sign to confirm that they have received, read and understood the relevant documents. An induction meeting will be arranged to clarify expectations, check understanding and provide an opportunity to ask questions.

All staff will receive training on the government's Prevent strategy to enable them to recognise children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism, identify signs of radicalisation and understand how to respond to concerns. Training will also cover child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) and female genital mutilation (FGM), alongside other relevant safeguarding issues.

Staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates throughout the year, as required, through staff meetings, emails, e-bulletins and other appropriate communication.

Volunteers will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and level of involvement with pupils, where applicable. Supply staff and other visitors will be provided with the school's Visitors Guidance Leaflet, which outlines relevant safeguarding expectations and procedures.

8.2. Administration of Emergency Medication

As a special school, staff may be required to administer emergency, potentially life-saving medication, such as adrenaline auto-injectors (EpiPens) or buccal midazolam, in response to a pupil's identified medical needs. Staff who may be required to administer

emergency medication will receive appropriate training and guidance to ensure they are confident and competent to do so. Staff will have the opportunity to sign an indemnity in relation to the administration of emergency medication. All arrangements and procedures are supported by the school's Management of Medical Needs Policy and individual healthcare plans.

NHS Community Nurses are also regularly on site to support pupils with their medical needs and, where appropriate, may oversee or provide guidance regarding the administration of emergency medication. However, Community Nurses are not on site at all times, and therefore staff cannot rely on their availability when a medical emergency occurs. Trained school staff must be prepared to follow the pupil's healthcare plan and administer emergency medication when required, while also seeking emergency medical assistance where appropriate.

The failure to administer emergency medication when it is required, where a member of staff has been appropriately trained and is expected to do so, may place a pupil at significant risk of harm and will therefore be treated as a safeguarding concern. Staff have a duty to follow the pupil's agreed healthcare plan and the school's procedures for responding to medical emergencies. Any concerns regarding a staff member's failure to follow these procedures will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and staff conduct procedures.

8.3. Volunteers, Work Experience and Students

- Volunteers and students have the responsibility to work within the school's code of conduct, KCSIE 2026, safeguarding policy and confidentiality/information sharing expectations. They will be briefed regarding their responsibilities and relevant policies by the DSL and/or the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.
- They should immediately share any concerns about a child's welfare with the DSL.
- They should be aware that the main categories of abuse are; Physical abuse, Emotional abuse, Sexual abuse and Neglect.

9. Dealing with a Disclosure

Any disclosure from a child or young person must be taken seriously. Staff should recognise that a disclosure may be difficult for a child to make and may be made directly, indirectly, through behaviour, or over a period of time. It is essential that all staff respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental manner, ensuring that the child feels listened to, believed and taken seriously.

Some children may face additional barriers to recognising, reporting or communicating abuse and neglect. This can be particularly relevant for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), speech, language and communication needs, cognitive difficulties, social communication differences, or those who use alternative forms of communication. These children may have difficulties understanding that what is happening to them is wrong, may be unable to communicate their experiences in a conventional way, or may rely on others to interpret their communication. As a result, they may be less likely to make a direct disclosure of abuse.

All staff must remain vigilant to signs, indicators and changes in presentation, behaviour, attendance, emotional wellbeing or communication, and should not assume that a child is safe simply because they have not made a disclosure. The absence of a disclosure does not mean that a child is not experiencing, witnessing or being affected by abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding concerns. Staff should be particularly mindful that children with additional needs may communicate distress through behaviours, actions or non-verbal means rather than through spoken language.

When a child chooses to share information about a safeguarding concern, abuse or neglect, staff must not investigate, make assumptions or promise confidentiality. Their role is to listen carefully, provide reassurance, accurately record what has been shared and report concerns promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. The welfare of the child is paramount, and all disclosures must be managed in a way that protects the child and preserves any potential evidence for further enquiries by Children's Social Care or the Police.

The following guidance outlines the actions all staff must take when responding to a disclosure of abuse or neglect.

Where a pupil discloses that he/she has been abused, the following guidelines must be followed:

RECEIVE > REACT > REASSURE > RECORD > REFER

RECEIVE

- If a child wants to talk to us, we never ask them to come back later. We ask them what they want to talk about and, if we are concerned about their welfare, we give them the time to speak.
- We do not promise confidentiality and will inform the child that we are happy to talk to them but if they tell us anything that we believe may be putting them at harm then we will pass it on to obtain the appropriate level of intervention.
- We will listen carefully to the child nor stop a child who is freely recalling information.
- Where a child is visibly upset or has an obvious injury, we will ask a child why they are upset or how an injury was caused or respond to a child wanting to talk so we clarify vague concerns and take right action.

REACT

- To clarify information may ask open-ended questions e.g. "Is there anything you'd like to tell me?", "Can you explain to me..." "Can you describe to me..."
- We do not ask leading or suggestive questions e.g. 'Did he/she do anything that they shouldn't have done?'
- We do not ask 'accusing' questions e.g. "Why didn't you tell someone earlier?"
- We will not criticise the alleged perpetrator, it may be someone that they will continue to live with.
- We do not ask the pupil to repeat their disclosure for any other member of staff; it is the person receiving the disclosure responsibility to share the information
- If we do not adhere to these guidelines, we may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by children's social care or Police.

REASSURE

- We ensure the child is aware that they have done the right thing in talking to us and that they have not done anything wrong.
- If we have sufficient safeguarding concerns that the child has been, or is at risk of harm, we do tell them that we will speak to someone to get help.

RECORD

- Notes are taken as soon as possible afterwards using the words that the child has used.
- We do not record assumptions and interpretations, just what was heard and seen.
- We do not destroy original paper notes even if we later write things up more neatly and fully or elsewhere (electronic system) until we are sure they will not be needed in any investigation.
- We record the date, time and place of the disclosure.
- We will sign any written records and identify our position in the school setting.
- We never ask a child to write an account or sign any of our documentation as this may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by children's social care or Police.

REFER

- Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection (insert details) or in their absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Person for child protection (insert details) who will be responsible for following the appropriate procedures. In the absence of anyone being available in school, contacting MASH for advice.
- To consult with your Designated Safeguarding Practitioner does not mean a referral has been made. This decision is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the appropriate agency as and when required.
- If you are unhappy about the response you receive from your Designated Safeguarding Lead, contact Sandwell Children's Trust Contact Centre on 0121 569 3100 where you may be put through to speak to a qualified social worker.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU LEAVE SCHOOL WITHOUT DISCUSSING YOUR CONCERNS WITH SOMEONE.

10. Reporting Concerns and Making Referrals

Staff, volunteers, and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue. *(See appendix C for a procedural flowchart.)*

The school will always discuss concerns with parents/carers and consent for any referrals should be sought unless to do so would place the child at risk of significant harm. However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Children's Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns.

10.1. The Orchard School Reporting

All staff have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns using the My Concern reporting system. Reports must be submitted using the individual staff member's own login credentials and completed as soon as possible after a concern arises, and no later than the end of the school day. Staff should seek advice and support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL whenever they have safeguarding concerns or are unsure about the appropriate course of action.

All records entered on My Concern must be accurate, detailed, factual and objective, clearly summarising the concern, identifying those involved, and outlining any actions already taken. Staff should avoid personal opinions or assumptions and ensure that all information is recorded professionally and confidentially, as safeguarding records form an important part of the school's duty to protect children and may be required as part of future safeguarding investigations or interventions.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU LEAVE SCHOOL WITHOUT DISCUSSING YOUR CONCERNS WITH SOMEONE.

10.2. Referrals - Request for Support

A referral involves sharing information in line with Multi Agency Threshold Document to either the Strengthening families Team, with the consent of the parents/carers, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the Police in matters of immediate risk (*See Appendix C*).

Parents/carers will be informed if a request for support is being made except in the circumstances outlined in communication with parents (It puts a child at further risk of harm)

However, inability to inform parents for any reason will not prevent a referral being made to children's social care via the MASH Service. It would then become a joint decision with Sandwell Children's Trust about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

If lower level multi agency support is required for a child and/or their family, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will, with consent of the parent/carer, complete an early Help assessment to enable the most appropriate services and support to be identified. This may be targeted multi-agency support to help the family resolve any identified concerns.

If the concerns are more complex and require statutory intervention, then the Designated Safeguarding Lead will request support from children's social care via the MASH service where a decision will be made whether any enquiries are needed under Section 17 (child in need assessment or Section 47 (child protection enquiry) of the Children Act 1989. A flowchart can be found at *Appendix C* detailing the referral procedure.

10.3. Family Help and Family First Approach

The school is committed to identifying and responding to emerging needs as early as possible to prevent difficulties from escalating and to improve outcomes for children, young people, and their families. Sandwell's Family Help approach, which is replacing traditional Early Help arrangements nationally through the Family First Partnership Programme, promotes a whole-family, multi-agency approach that ensures families receive the right support at the right time. This approach recognises that children achieve the best outcomes when services work collaboratively with families to address needs at the earliest opportunity.

Where concerns are identified that do not meet the threshold for statutory social care intervention, school staff should consider whether a child or family would benefit from Family Help support. School staff are often well placed to identify emerging needs relating to attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing, mental health, parenting support, housing, financial difficulties, family relationships, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), substance misuse, or other factors that may impact a child's wellbeing and development.

The school will work in partnership with children, parents, carers, and other agencies to provide support at the earliest opportunity. Support may be delivered directly by the school through pastoral services, attendance support, safeguarding interventions, emotional wellbeing provision, SEND support, mentoring, and signposting to local services. Where additional support is required, the school may initiate or contribute to a Family Help Assessment and participate in Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings to coordinate support and monitor progress.

Referral Pathways

Concerns about a child or family's additional needs should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or an appropriate member of the safeguarding team. With parental consent, and where appropriate, referrals may be made to Family Help services, Family Hubs, health services, voluntary sector organisations, community support services, or other targeted support providers. If concerns indicate that a child may be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made immediately to Children's Social Care in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Support Available in Sandwell

A wide range of support is available to children, young people, and families through Sandwell's Family Help Partnership and Family Hubs network. Family Hubs provide universal and targeted services for families with children aged 0 to 19 years (or up to 25 years for young people with SEND) and include support relating to parenting, emotional wellbeing, infant development, school readiness, family relationships, health, SEND, youth support, and access to community services. Additional targeted support may be available through local authority services, health professionals, education providers, community organisations, and voluntary sector agencies.

The school will maintain effective partnerships with Sandwell Family Hubs, the Family Help Partnership, health services, Children's Social Care, the Police, and other local agencies to ensure children and families receive coordinated and timely support. Staff should seek advice from the DSL whenever they are unsure whether a concern requires internal support, a Family Help referral, or a safeguarding referral to Children's Social Care.

Principles of Family Help

The Family Help approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- Providing support as early as possible to prevent problems from escalating.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, parents, and carers.
- Building on family strengths and resilience.
- Taking a whole-family approach to assessment and support.
- Ensuring agencies work together effectively and share information appropriately.
- Delivering coordinated, outcome-focused interventions that improve children's safety, wellbeing, attendance, learning, and life chances.

This school recognises that effective Family Help support can significantly improve outcomes for children and families and forms an important part of the wider safeguarding system.

10.4. Referral Process for Children at Risk of Significant Harm

Step 1 - Complete a Multi-Agency Request for support Form (MARF) (or if immediate harm call through to the MASH on 0121 569 3100) including any relevant body Map, Child Exploitation Screening form, and/or Neglect screening tool (if appropriate) and send into the MASH secure email address on the front of the form. Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible using the SAFER guidelines. If there are any Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) concerns, then a CSE screening tool should always be completed and submitted to Sandwell Children's Trust. If there are Neglect concerns a Neglect screening tool/GCP2 Tool should be submitted if they have been completed

Step 2 - If a child is at imminent significant risk of harm/immediate danger (and reporting concerns cannot wait an hour while a MARF is completed) the referrer should consider telephoning 999 and Sandwell Children's Trust contact centre (0121 569 3100). A MARF will also need to be completed within an hour of reporting the concern

Step 3 - Accurately record the action agreed following the referral or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision noting with whom discussions were held and who made the decisions on the appropriate school form.

11. Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Record Keeping

11.1. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff and volunteers. Concerns about sharing information must never prevent staff from promoting the welfare of children or taking action to protect them from harm. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to share relevant safeguarding information with appropriate professionals and agencies, including Children's Social Care, the Police and other relevant safeguarding partners, when necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.

The school will comply with the Information Sharing Duty under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004, which came into force on 30 September 2026, and the associated statutory *Information sharing to safeguard children and young people* guidance.

The Information Sharing Duty applies where a relevant person holds information that they consider is relevant to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of a child and considers that sharing the information may help another relevant person to:

- assess a child's needs or risk;
- make a decision;
- provide support; or
- take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

The duty is not limited to situations where a child is already at risk of significant harm or where a child protection threshold has been reached. Information may be shared to identify emerging needs, prevent concerns from escalating, provide appropriate support and promote the welfare of a child. The duty can also apply where another relevant person requests information.

Information sharing must be relevant, necessary, proportionate, accurate and purposeful. Staff should consider:

- whether the information is relevant to the current safeguarding or welfare concern;
- what the recipient genuinely needs to know in order to carry out their safeguarding function;
- whether the information is accurate, clearly presented and appropriately contextualised;
- whether the information being shared is focused and proportionate to the purpose for sharing;
- what the potential impact of sharing or not sharing the information may be on the child; and
- whether information about another individual is relevant to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of the child.

The Information Sharing Duty does not require staff to share everything they know about a child or family. Information should be limited to that which is relevant and necessary for the safeguarding or welfare purpose.

Where the statutory Information Sharing Duty applies, consent is not required as the legal basis for sharing information. However, wherever it is safe, appropriate and practicable to do so, the school will be open with children and families about what information is being shared, with whom and why. Staff must not allow concerns about consent, confidentiality or data protection to prevent necessary safeguarding information from being shared where the statutory conditions for sharing are met.

The duty does not apply where a practitioner, using professional judgement, considers that sharing the information would be more detrimental to the child than not sharing it. Such circumstances are expected to be exceptional. Any decision not to share information on this basis must be discussed with the DSL or Deputy DSL, where practicable, and the decision, rationale and safeguarding considerations must be clearly recorded.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information where there is a lawful basis for doing so and where sharing is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Data protection legislation must not be used as a reason to withhold relevant safeguarding information. Data protection principles continue to apply and information must be handled securely, appropriately and only shared with those who have a legitimate need to know.

If a child wishes to confide in a member of staff and asks that information be kept secret, staff must explain sensitively and appropriately that they cannot guarantee confidentiality and may need to share information to keep the child or others safe.

Staff and volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work must handle and share that information in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, the statutory *Information sharing to safeguard children and young people* guidance and relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures.

If staff are unsure whether information should be shared, they must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL without delay.

11.2. Record Keeping

Sharing the right information at the right time with the right people, together with accurate and timely record keeping, is fundamental to effective safeguarding practice. It enables professionals and agencies to work together effectively to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. The importance of effective information sharing and good safeguarding and child protection record keeping has been highlighted through learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), previously known as Serious Case Reviews.

Information sharing and record keeping in school will be completed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, the Information Sharing Duty under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004 and the associated statutory information-sharing guidance.

N.B. Data protection legislation must not be used as a reason to withhold relevant information where sharing is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

We maintain the principles of effective record keeping by clearly recording concerns, information shared, actions taken, key discussions and defensible decision-making. Records should demonstrate:

- what the concern was;
- what information was known or received;
- what information was shared and with whom;
- why information was or was not shared;
- what action was taken;
- who was involved in decision-making; and
- the outcome or any required follow-up action.

Effective record keeping helps us to:

- identify causes for concern at an early stage. Often it is only when a number of seemingly minor issues are considered together that a pattern may become apparent indicating a safeguarding or child protection concern; and
- monitor and manage our safeguarding practices and provide evidence of robust and effective safeguarding policy and practice.

Our record-keeping procedures ensure that safeguarding information is kept confidential, accurate, secure and accessible only to those who have a legitimate safeguarding or professional need to access it.

Our records include a clear and detailed log of the concern, discussion, suspicion or allegation as soon as possible after the event. Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make a written record as soon as possible and, wherever practicable, within the hour.

The record should include:

- the child's own words wherever possible;
- what was said, seen or observed;
- the date, time and location of the incident or disclosure;
- any relevant non-verbal behaviour;
- the date and time the record was made;
- statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions;
- a clear distinction between fact and opinion;
- any information shared and with whom;
- the rationale for safeguarding decisions; and
- details of any referral or information shared with other services, such as Children's Social Care or Prevent, together with the outcome or subsequent follow-up.

Where information is shared or a decision is made not to share information, the rationale and relevant safeguarding considerations must be recorded.

A record will be made of any visible marks or injuries to a child that give cause for concern. This will also be completed on a body map where appropriate. The child should not be examined intimately, and photographs of injuries or marks must not be taken by school staff unless specifically requested by statutory services or otherwise authorised in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

All records will be signed and dated clearly, with the name of the signatory clearly printed where records are completed on paper.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff or volunteer will:

- make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation using the appropriate form or recording system utilised by the school;
- not destroy the original notes in case they are required as evidence;
- record the date, time and place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child;
- record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions; and
- distinguish fact from opinion.

Children should NOT and will NOT be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any safeguarding records.

All records of a child protection nature, whether handwritten or typed, will be given to the DSL, or where online systems are used, a digital alert will be submitted, before the end of the working day wherever practicable. These should be filed in the individual pupil's safeguarding file in chronological order, and a chronology of significant events should be maintained where appropriate.

No copies of safeguarding records will be retained by individual members of staff or volunteers unless specifically authorised as part of an agreed safeguarding process.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, the Information Sharing Duty and relevant education record-keeping requirements.

When a pupil moves to another educational provision, relevant safeguarding information will be transferred securely and in accordance with statutory requirements. This will include information relating to risks posed to the pupil or others, where relevant to safeguarding and the receiving setting's ability to support and protect the child.

We will ensure that when a child moves to a new educational provision, their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. In the case of a child becoming home educated, relevant safeguarding information will be transferred to the Local Authority home education team in accordance with local arrangements and statutory requirements.

The transfer will normally take place within five working days for an in-year transfer or within the first five working days of the start of a new term. Files will be securely transferred using the school's approved transfer process, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. The safeguarding file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

When we receive a safeguarding file, we will acknowledge receipt to the previous school or educational setting and ensure that relevant staff, including the safeguarding team and SENCO where appropriate, have access to the information required to safeguard and support the child.

The school will consider the information received when identifying safeguarding needs and, where appropriate, will complete or update any required risk assessment, safety plan, individual healthcare plan or other relevant support arrangements.

We retain safeguarding records in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, relevant statutory guidance and the school's record retention policy. At the end of the required retention period, records will be securely archived or destroyed as appropriate.

Where records relate to an allegation of sexual abuse made against a member of staff, the records will be retained in accordance with the retention requirements set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and relevant guidance. Such records will normally be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer, unless a longer retention period is required for legal, safeguarding or other statutory reasons.

In addition:

Appendix E sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to safer recruitment.

Appendix D sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff.

12. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that effective safeguarding is built upon positive and collaborative relationships with parents and carers. Wherever appropriate, concerns about a child will be discussed with parents/carers and their consent sought for support and intervention. However, consent will not be sought, and information may be shared without prior discussion, where doing so would:

- Place the child at risk of significant harm or increase the risk of significant harm.
- Place another child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm.
- Compromise enquiries or investigations being undertaken by Children's Social Care, the Police or other statutory agencies.
- No consent should not be a barrier to sharing information or taking appropriate action

We will ensure, wherever possible, that parents and carers understand the responsibilities placed on schools and staff in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The school is committed to working closely with parents and carers to help keep children safe. This includes raising awareness of safeguarding issues and providing information about emerging risks within the community, online safety concerns, harmful online content, hoaxes, challenges and trends, monitoring and filtering systems, parental controls, and wider community safety issues.

In cases where allegations of abuse are made against another child, the school will normally inform the parents/carers of all children involved, unless advised otherwise by Children's Social Care, the Police, or another relevant agency.

Where required, the school will arrange interpretation or translation services to ensure that parents/carers are able to fully understand and engage with safeguarding processes and discussions.

At The Orchard School, we operate an open-door approach and actively encourage parents and carers to share any concerns they may have about their own child or any child they believe may be at risk of harm. All concerns will be listened to, explored and responded to in a sensitive, respectful and timely manner.

Parents and carers are expected to support their child's welfare and education by ensuring regular attendance and punctuality. This includes ensuring that children arrive at school on time, are ready for local authority transport when required, and are collected promptly or received from local authority transport at the end of the school day.

To help us safeguard children effectively, parents and carers are expected to keep the school informed of any significant changes in family circumstances, changes of address, and up-to-date emergency contact details, including at least two contact numbers.

We also encourage parents and carers to inform the school of any injuries, bruises or incidents sustained outside of school so that staff can appropriately monitor and support the child's wellbeing.

By working together, schools, parents and carers can help to ensure that children are safe, supported and able to achieve their full potential.

13. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers, Supply Staff and Contractors

See appendix D for detailed Managing Allegations Procedures

The Orchard School is committed to creating and maintaining a culture of openness, transparency and safeguarding vigilance. Any concern, allegation or complaint relating to the conduct of an adult working with children will be taken seriously and managed promptly, fairly and consistently.

An allegation relates to an adult working with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, who 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.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way which indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including behaviour outside of work that presents a transferable risk.

The school recognises two levels of concern:

- Allegations that meet the harm threshold.
- Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, known as **low-level concerns**.

All concerns will be assessed using professional judgement, managed sensitively and responded to in a manner that safeguards children whilst ensuring support and fairness for the adult concerned. Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

13.1 Allegations that Meet the Harm Threshold

Any allegation that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against a child, posed a risk of harm to children, or demonstrated behaviour which makes them unsuitable to work with children must be reported immediately.

The member of staff receiving the allegation must:

- Listen carefully and remain objective.
- Make an accurate written record using the informant's own words.
- Record the date, time, location, individuals involved and any actions taken.
- Sign and date the record.
- Pass the information immediately to the Headteacher.

Under no circumstances should the informant be asked to provide a written statement or sign documentation. The responsibility for recording the concern rests with the member of staff receiving the allegation.

The Headteacher will not investigate the allegation or take detailed statements. Instead, they will make a referral using the appropriate Multi-Agency Position of Trust (POT) referral process and seek advice from the Sandwell Safeguarding Hub and the LADO, as required. Where necessary, a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) will also be completed in respect of the child.

Appropriate support will be provided to any member of staff subject to an allegation, including the allocation of a named contact within school. The school will undertake a risk assessment to determine whether alternative duties, redeployment or suspension should be considered whilst enquiries are ongoing. Suspension is not an automatic response and alternatives will always be explored where appropriate.

Where allegations involve the Headteacher, concerns must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors, or in their absence the Vice-Chair of Governors.

Chair of Governors: Helen Grindulis (contact via the school office)

Vice-Chair of Governors: Jessica Patel (contact via the school office)

The same procedures will apply where concerns relate to the Headteacher.

Where safeguarding concerns arise regarding a parent or carer who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults, staff must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead so that consideration can be given to whether the Position of Trust process should be implemented.

At the conclusion of any allegation process, the school will review the circumstances of the case and consider whether any procedural, policy or training improvements are required.

The school will maintain a clear record of all decisions and the rationale for actions taken.

13.2 Position of Trust referrals

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach. In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual.

Position of Trust referrals will be referred via the LADO at Sandwell LADO <Sandwell_LADO@sandwellchildrenstrust.org>.

A MARF for the child will be completed, if requested by Sandwell Children's Trust and a Multi-Agency POT referral form <https://www.sandwellcsp.org.uk/documents/lado-consultation-and-referral-form/> for the person allegations have been made about. This will detail the alleged incident and have all relevant details regards the child and the adult who the allegations have been made about.

13.3 Low-Level Concerns

The Orchard School recognises that safeguarding cultures are strengthened when staff are confident to share concerns about behaviour that may not meet the harm threshold but may nevertheless be inconsistent with expected professional standards.

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff Code of Conduct; and/or
- Relates to conduct outside of work that causes a sense of unease regarding the individual's suitability to work with children; and
- Does not meet the threshold for referral to the LADO.

Examples might include:

- Being overly familiar with a child.
- Favouritism towards individual pupils.
- Boundary blurring behaviours.
- Inappropriate language or conduct.
- Behaviour that could undermine professional standards.

Although such concerns may appear minor in isolation, the school recognises that serious safeguarding incidents can develop from patterns of low-level concerns over time.

All low-level concerns will:

- Be taken seriously.
- Be reported promptly.
- Be managed in accordance with the school's Low-Level Concerns Policy.
- Be recorded on MyConcern.
- Be reviewed to identify any emerging patterns of behaviour.

Where concerns relate to supply staff, agency workers, contractors or volunteers, information will also be shared with their employer where appropriate to support safer recruitment and safeguarding practices.

Further guidance can be found in the school's separate Low-Level Concerns Policy.

14. Whistleblowing

The Orchard School is committed to maintaining a culture where staff feel able to raise concerns about safeguarding, poor practice or professional conduct without fear of reprisals.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague may find themselves in a difficult position. However, all staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount, and concerns should never be ignored.

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team actively promote a culture of vigilance and professional curiosity. Staff are encouraged to discuss concerns about behaviour both within and outside the workplace, including behaviour online, where this may impact upon the safeguarding of children.

The school's Whistleblowing Policy provides a mechanism for staff to raise concerns confidentially and ensures such concerns are investigated appropriately.

Staff should normally report concerns to:

- The Headteacher
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead, where appropriate.

Concerns about the Headteacher should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.

Where a member of staff believes that concerns are not being addressed appropriately, or where immediate action is required to safeguard a child, they may contact:

- Children's Social Care.
- The Police.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Other relevant regulatory or safeguarding agencies.

No member of staff will suffer detriment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with our Headteacher, Governing Body or Senior Leadership Team or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- Phoning the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 (available from 8:00am to 8:00pm or emailing help@nspcc.org.uk)
- If you feel unable or do not wish to discuss your concerns with the Headteacher, the School Governing Body or a council officer, you can contact the UK whistleblowing charity called "Protect" which can provide free confidential advice on how an issue should be dealt with. Their telephone number is 020 3117 2520.

15. Complaints Procedure

The Orchard School welcomes concerns, comments and complaints as an opportunity to improve practice and ensure that children remain safe, supported and respected.

Where a pupil, parent or carer raises concerns about professional conduct or poor practice which do not initially meet the threshold for child protection intervention, the school's Complaints Procedure will be followed.

Examples may include:

- Unfair treatment of a pupil.
- Bullying, belittling or humiliating behaviour.
- Discriminatory practice.
- Poor communication or professionalism.

Complaints will be investigated fairly, proportionately and in a timely manner by senior leaders, the Headteacher and, where appropriate, the Governing Body.

Complaints made by members of staff will be managed through the school's disciplinary, grievance or other relevant employment procedures.

If, during an investigation, information is identified which indicates that a child may be at risk of harm, the matter will immediately be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and, where required, referrals will be made to relevant safeguarding agencies.

The school is committed to ensuring that all complaints are dealt with respectfully, transparently and in the best interests of children.

16. Safer Recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) together with the LCSP and the school's Safer Recruitment policy and procedures.

Safer recruitment means that applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history and explains any gaps in that history.
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications.

- if offered employment, be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role. This will include an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check for those engaged in regulated activity.
- if offered employment, provide evidence of their right to work in the UK.
- be interviewed, if shortlisted.

The school will also:

- verify the preferred candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- obtain references for all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates.
- carry out additional or alternative checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK.
- ensure that applicants for teaching posts are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.
- consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on any shortlisted candidates. This is likely to assist with identifying any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which may then be explored further at interview.
- Share with the preferred candidate that online checks will be conducted.

At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school. All staff are reminded of this obligation at the time of appointment and annually.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken. This is checked regularly by both the DSL and the Safeguarding Link Governor, to ensure it is up to date.

The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Detailed guidance on when to refer to the DBS, and what information must be provided, can be found on www.GOV.UK. Referrals should be made as soon as possible, and ordinarily on conclusion of an investigation, when an individual is removed from working in regulated activity, which could include being suspended, or is redeployed to work that is not regulated activity.

17. Child on Child abuse including Violence and Harassment

The Orchard takes all allegations and concerns relating to child-on-child abuse seriously and will respond appropriately to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. When considering incidents, due regard will be given to each pupil's age, developmental stage, level of understanding, communication needs, and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Concerns will never be dismissed, minimised, or ignored. However, where behaviour is assessed as arising from a lack of understanding, unmet learning needs, or developmental factors, the most appropriate response may be through the Behaviour Policy, targeted educational interventions, and the delivery of an adapted and age-appropriate PSHE curriculum to promote understanding, respect, and safe relationships. All decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, with safeguarding considerations remaining paramount.

We recognise that sometimes children can abuse other children. This may occur inside and outside of school/college.

Child on child abuse involves someone who abuses a 'vulnerability' or power imbalance to harm another, and have the opportunity or be in an environment where this possible.

This may include:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying)

- Physical harm
- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment
- Discrimination
- Upskirting – which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing. With the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm to the victim;
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (teenage relationship abuse)
- sharing of nudes and semi-nudes’ Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

We recognize that child on child abuse can occur between and across different age ranges.

We accept that whilst perpetrators of child on child abuse pose a risk to others they are often victims of abuse themselves. We will work closely with alleged perpetrators to halt and prevent further occurrences. We will explain to children (at their level of understanding) that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them.

All children should be able to attend school and learn in a safe environment. When this is compromised by the actions or behaviours of their peers this will be dealt with predominately through our behaviour policy.

Prevention is a fundamental method of minimising risks and we will do this by:

- Ensuring all staff have training on child on child abuse
- We will adopt the ‘whole school approach’ to tackling sexism and any form of discrimination.
- We will challenge inappropriate behaviours between children
- providing developmentally appropriate PSHE syllabus which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified at risk.
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils

We follow both national and local guidance and policies to support any children/young people subject to child-on-child abuse to enable provision of effective support

We fully understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school it may happen. Equally whilst we are aware that female students are the predominant victims we will take all reports seriously. As such all our staff and children/young people are supported to:

- be alert to child-on-child abuse (including violence and Harassment)
- understand how the school views and responds to child-on-child abuse
- Stay safe and be confident that reports of such abuse will be taken seriously.

We will not tolerate instances of child on child abuse and will not pass it off as “banter”, or “part of growing up”.

Sometimes allegations are made of a specific safeguarding nature. These may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Some of the features of these could include:

- Allegations against an older pupil’s behaviour towards a younger child
- Severe Bullying
- Is of a serious nature possibly related to a criminal offence
- Indicates that other pupils have been affected by this pupil
- Taking part in the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes’
- Photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts
- Forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

All complaints and incident will be taken seriously with a record of incidents and action taken.

An assessment of an incident between children will be completed to consider:

- Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?
- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery
- The effect on the victim
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child or young person’s motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred

- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

We understand the importance of dealing with a situation of child-on-child abuse immediately and sensitively. We will gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts and we consider the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. We avoid any language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

Taking Action – What we do:

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Put appropriate support in place (e.g. mentoring counselling, emotional well being service)
- Consider referral to Police or Children's Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting
- Record all incidents and all action taken

Consideration will be given to whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern and then report to the designated safeguarding lead or the safeguarding person on duty in the absence of the DSL.

- A factual record should be made but no attempt should be made to investigate at this stage,
- The DSL can discuss the case with advisory personnel such as the Single point of contact (SPOC), Strengthening Families team or the Education safeguarding officer to determine if a referral to MASH is required. If there is an indication that a criminal offence has been committed then the police may become involved. School may be advised to refer this case to the police or advise parents to do so.
- The DSL will speak to parents of the victim(S) and the alleged perpetrator to inform them of the referral as long as it does not put either parties at risk of further harm.
- Records of action and advise will be kept on both children's file
- Consideration will be given to whether the alleged perpetrator should be excluded from school according to the school's behaviour policy
- If children services decide there will be no further action a thorough investigation will be carried out in school using the school's usual Behaviour procedure/sanctions.
- If the school, consider a safeguarding risk is still present then a full risk assessment will be carried out with a date set for follow up review.

18. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (including youth- produced sexual imagery)

18.1 The Orchard School's approach

At The Orchard School, we recognise that incidents involving the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes are not limited to older children or pupils attending mainstream settings. Although such incidents are often discussed in the media in relation to older young people, primary-age children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may also be affected.

Research and safeguarding guidance highlight that children may encounter or become involved in incidents of this nature from a young age. We therefore ensure that all staff are trained to recognise concerns, respond appropriately to disclosures and support the children involved.

We recognise that a pupil does not need to own or have direct access to a personal device at school or home to be at risk of online harm. Pupils may access devices belonging to family members or peers, or be exposed to imagery through other means. All concerns will therefore be taken seriously, regardless of a pupil's access to technology.

The school will follow the principle of proportionality, prioritising the welfare, safety and protection of all children involved. Responses will take account of each pupil's chronological and developmental age, individual SEND, communication needs, understanding of consent and capacity to understand the situation.

18.2 Staff responsibilities when responding to an incident

Any incident involving the consensual or non-consensual creation, sending, receipt or sharing of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately. This includes manipulated, AI-generated or deepfake imagery that depicts or appears to depict a child.

Staff must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If imagery has been viewed accidentally, this must be reported to the DSL immediately.
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.
- Question pupils to obtain details about the imagery or investigate the incident. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff who do not need to know, pupils involved or parents and carers. Information must be shared on a need-to-know basis in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Blame, shame or make judgemental comments about any pupil involved.

Staff should explain to the pupil that the concern needs to be passed to the DSL and reassure them that they will receive help and support. Staff should listen calmly, avoid leading questions and follow the school's safeguarding reporting procedures.

18.3 Initial review meeting and risk assessment

Following a report, the DSL will arrange an initial review meeting with appropriate safeguarding or senior leadership staff. This may include the member of staff who received the disclosure.

The meeting will consider the available information and determine:

- Whether any pupil is at immediate risk of harm.
- Whether a referral to the police and/or children's social care is required.
- Whether there is a clear and necessary safeguarding reason for the DSL to view the imagery. In most cases, imagery should not be viewed.
- What further information is required to assess the situation and determine an appropriate response.
- Whether parents or carers should be informed and involved.
- Whether the imagery has been shared further, including the platforms or services involved, where known.
- Whether action is required to contain the sharing or seek removal of the imagery, in accordance with DfE guidance.
- Any relevant contextual safeguarding concerns, including the pupils' age, developmental stage, SEND, health conditions, communication needs, understanding of consent and capacity to consent.
- Whether another school, college, setting or individual needs to be contacted to safeguard the children involved.

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

- The incident involves an adult, including an adult who may be posing as a child online.
- There is reason to believe a pupil has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, including where SEND may affect their understanding of consent.
- The imagery depicts violent sexual acts or sexual acts that are unusual for the pupil's developmental stage.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil depicted is under 13.
- There is reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm as a result of the incident, including concerns about self-harm or suicidal thoughts.

Given the complex safeguarding and vulnerability needs of pupils at The Orchard School, the DSL will take a particularly cautious approach. Where a pupil's SEND, communication needs or developmental understanding may affect their capacity to consent or increase their vulnerability to harm, the DSL will seek immediate advice from, and make referrals to, the relevant safeguarding agencies in accordance with UKCIS guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

Where the above referral criteria are not met, the DSL may decide, following a thorough risk assessment and consultation with appropriate senior staff, that the incident can be managed within school. The rationale for this decision must be clearly recorded. A decision not to refer initially does not prevent a referral being made if further information or concerns emerge.

18.4 Further review and ongoing safeguarding

Where an initial decision has been made not to refer to the police and/or children's social care, the DSL will undertake a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. This may include speaking with the pupils involved, where appropriate, using communication methods and reasonable adjustments suited to their individual needs.

The DSL will ensure that any new information indicating that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm is acted upon immediately, including making a referral to children's social care and/or the police where required.

The DSL may use recognised assessment tools, including the Brook Traffic Light Tool and the NSPCC Framework for Harmful Sexual Behaviour, to inform professional judgement and support proportionate decision-making.

18.5 Informing parents and carers

Parents and carers will normally be informed at an early stage and kept involved in the safeguarding response, unless there is a good reason to believe that doing so would place a pupil at risk of harm. The DSL will record the rationale for any decision not to inform parents or carers and will follow advice from relevant safeguarding agencies where appropriate.

18.6 Referrals to the police and children's social care

Where a police referral is required, the DSL will contact the police via 101 or the appropriate West Midlands Police reporting route. In an emergency or where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, emergency services will be contacted.

Referrals to children's social care will be made in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures. The DSL will record all referrals, advice received, decisions made and subsequent actions.

18.7 Recording incidents

All incidents involving the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, together with the school's risk assessments, decisions, referrals and actions, will be recorded securely on My Concern in accordance with the school's safeguarding recording and information-sharing procedures.

18.8 Curriculum coverage and education

The Orchard School recognises that preventative education is essential in helping pupils develop the knowledge and skills needed to keep themselves safe. Teaching about online safety, consent, healthy relationships and the sharing of images will be incorporated into the school's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (where appropriate), PSHE and Computing programmes.

Teaching will be developmentally appropriate and differentiated to reflect pupils' individual learning capabilities, EHCPs, communication needs, chronological age and developmental stage.

Depending on individual needs, learning may include:

- Understanding what personal images are and why some images should not be taken or shared.
- Recognising when someone is asking them to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Understanding consent, privacy and respectful relationships.
- Learning how to respond to requests for images or when receiving unwanted images.
- Understanding the potential consequences of requesting, creating or sharing inappropriate imagery.
- Knowing how to express disapproval, say no, seek help and report concerns to a trusted adult.

For some pupils, this may involve modelling how to ask for consent before taking photographs, using visual resources or social stories, or teaching pupils how to communicate that they do not want their image taken or shared. For other pupils, more detailed learning about online image sharing, exploitation and the law may be appropriate.

The school will ensure that learning is accessible, meaningful and relevant to pupils' individual needs, helping them develop the confidence and skills to seek support if they experience or witness an incident.

19. Photography and Images

To protect pupils, we will:

- Seek parents written consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in publications).
- Use only the pupil's first name with an image.
- Ensure pupils are appropriately dressed.
- Encourage pupils or parents to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.
- Staff and other visitors to school should never take or download images of children on their own phone, digital camera, or digital video recorder.

See separate online safety, and acceptable use of mobile technology procedures for details.

20. Concerns re: Terrorism and Radicalisation

20.1 Preventing Radicalisation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty"). Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol.

School will refer any incidents of suspected radicalisation or children deemed at risk on a Multi- agency referral form (MARF) to the MASH marked as PREVENT referral.

Contact can be made with the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321 or contact made with the LA Prevent Support prevent_inbox@sandwell.gov.uk

It is important for staff to be aware that children with SEND can sometimes be more susceptible to radicalisation due to a wide range of factors including increased levels of social isolation and impaired ability - for some young people - to understand manipulation techniques. We must remain vigilant and avoid minimising concerns or assuming our students could not go on to cause harm to others or hold extreme views.

Extremism: is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Radicalisation: is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

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

20.2 Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential, multi-agency support programme that forms part of the Prevent strategy. It focuses on providing early support to people identified as being susceptible to radicalisation and at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Where a Prevent referral is made, it may be assessed by the police and, where appropriate, referred to a local authority-led Channel panel. The panel will consider the information available, assess the individual's vulnerabilities and risk, and determine whether Channel support is appropriate. Where a person is accepted into Channel, a tailored package of support may be offered to help reduce their vulnerability to radicalisation.

Channel is a voluntary process. The individual must consent to receiving Channel support. For children under 18, consent must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian, or the agency responsible for their care, as appropriate.

The Orchard School will cooperate with the local authority-led Channel panel, as required, and a school representative, including the DSL or Prevent Lead, may be asked to contribute relevant information or attend a panel meeting.

The DSL will consider whether relevant safeguarding information should be shared with a pupil's receiving school or setting when they leave The Orchard School. This may include information about a pupil who is receiving support through Channel, where sharing is necessary and appropriate to ensure continuity of safeguarding and support. Information will be shared securely, proportionately and in accordance with the school's safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

Further information is available in the Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel guidance.

20.3 Training regarding radicalisation and extremism

The Orchard School will ensure that relevant staff and governors receive appropriate training to understand the Prevent duty, recognise signs that a pupil may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know how to respond to and report concerns in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Prevent training will be provided at induction, as appropriate to staff roles and responsibilities, and refreshed regularly in line with current statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements and the school's training programme. The school will maintain records of staff training.

The DSL or Prevent Lead will receive more in-depth Prevent training, including how to make referrals and work with Channel panels. This training will be refreshed at least every two years, in line with the recommendation in the Prevent Duty Guidance.

Channel awareness and panel training are available for staff who may be asked to contribute to or attend a multi-agency Channel panel. The school will ensure that relevant staff access appropriate training where required.

21.Safe Touch and Physical Interventions (Use of Reasonable Force)

It is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but there may be circumstances when pupils at The Orchard School need physical interventions for issues such as:

- Management of physical or care needs.
- To prevent a child harming themselves or others.
- When a child needs instruction in the use of a particular tool/piece of equipment.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and sanctions at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during the teaching session or otherwise.

The general guidance on Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (HMGovt June 2019); Behaviour and discipline in schools Advice for Headteachers and school staff (HMGovt 2024); The Use of Reasonable force: Guidance for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies (2025) and continues to be supplemented by a specialist guidance document, namely Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorders (2012); and Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Pupil with Severe Behavioural Difficulties.

The circular entitled Guidance on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions for Staff Working with Children and Adults who display Extreme Behaviour in Association with Learning Disability and /or neurodivergent applies to all special school settings.

Section 246 of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires the Governing Body to ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil; and reporting each such incident to each parent of the pupil as soon as practicable after the incident. The member of staff must not report the incident to a parent if it appears to that member of staff that doing so would be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. If that is the case, or if there is no parent of the pupil to whom the incident could be reported, then the incident must be reported to the local authority where the pupil normally lives.

Procedures:

- In the event of an injury, either accidental or otherwise staff should always complete an accident form on the online portal with a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Senior SSP.
- Physical restraint should only be used in line with the behaviour and manual handling policies and should only be done by CPI Safety Intervention trained staff. This should be part of an agreed behavior plan shared with parents and carers. Where the incident is a new one, a physical intervention plan should be completed as soon as possible and shared with parents. This process is outlined in the schools Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy.
- Particularly in cases where a pupil is being violent, ensure that two people are dealing with the situation and if you are on your own a door is left open so someone else can see what is occurring.
- Staff should ensure they have a witness if possible and record any restraint used on the relevant form (see Behaviour policy). The Headteacher will keep these records securely centrally in a bound book.
- If a child touches you in an inappropriate place, record what has happened on welfare sheet or on My concern and ensure another member of staff is aware this has happened. This will also be shared with parents if appropriate.
- Do not accept kisses on the mouth from children.
- Be mindful of how and where you touch children (see Safe Touch Protocol).
- Reporting such an incident should occur to the parent of the pupil as soon as practicable after the incident. The member of staff must not report the incident to a parent if it appears to that member of staff that doing so would be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. If that is the case, the incident must be reported to the local authority where the pupil normally lives.
- See Behaviour, Moving and handling, and Safe Touch Policies for details.

22.Online Safety (see Separate Online Safety policy for further details)

The Orchard School recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and that children and young people must be protected from harm both online and offline. The school acknowledges that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers to recognising, understanding and reporting online risks. Online safety education, support and

risk assessments will therefore be adapted to reflect pupils' individual needs, communication methods, levels of understanding and vulnerabilities.

The school has regard to the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance and the DfE's Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges, including the filtering and monitoring and cyber security standards.

22.1 Online safety leadership and responsibilities

The Online Safety Lead is Lauren Petrie.

The ICT Network and Services Manager is responsible for the technical management of the school's online safety, filtering and monitoring systems, working in partnership with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and senior leaders.

The Governing Body retains strategic responsibility for ensuring that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and that the school meets its safeguarding responsibilities.

The school's Online Safety Group consists of the DSL, PSHE Coordinator, ICT Network and Services Manager and Online Safety Governor. The group meets at least twice during the academic year and additionally when required to review online safety arrangements, emerging risks, incidents and the effectiveness of the school's provision.

The group will ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly assigned and that the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements are reviewed at least annually. Reviews will consider the needs and vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND, the effectiveness of existing systems, safeguarding incidents, changes in technology and any identified risks. Reviews and resulting actions will be documented and reported to the appropriate senior leaders and governing body.

The school will ensure that harmful and inappropriate content is blocked without unreasonably affecting teaching and learning, and that effective monitoring arrangements are in place to meet the school's safeguarding needs. Monitoring alerts and reports will be reviewed and acted upon in accordance with the school's safeguarding and filtering and monitoring procedures.

The school will keep its cyber security arrangements under review as part of its wider digital safeguarding responsibilities. Cyber security risks and any required actions will be considered by the appropriate school leaders, the Online Safety Group and the Governing Body.

22.2 Online safety education and awareness

Pupils and parents are made aware of online safety risks through curriculum teaching, including Computing and IT, PSHE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), as appropriate to pupils' individual needs and levels of understanding. Online safety information is also shared with parents through newsletters, parent workshops and other school communications.

Pupils will be supported to develop the knowledge and skills needed to use technology safely and responsibly. Teaching will be adapted to pupils' communication needs, cognitive understanding and individual vulnerabilities, using accessible language, visual resources, symbols, modelling and other appropriate approaches.

Pupils will be encouraged and supported to communicate concerns about their use of technology or anything they encounter online that makes them feel uncomfortable, worried or unsafe. Staff must take concerns seriously, respond appropriately to pupils' communication and report any safeguarding concerns to the DSL without delay.

Where appropriate to their level of understanding, pupils will be taught how to keep personal information safe, including their full name, telephone number, school, home address and passwords. They will also be supported to understand the importance of not sharing personal information or images with unknown or untrusted individuals.

22.3 Online safety risks

The school recognises that online safety risks are continually evolving. These risks can be categorised into four areas:

- **Content:** Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, including pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact:** Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, including peer pressure, commercial exploitation, and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention of grooming or exploiting pupils for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

- **Conduct:** Online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. This may include cyberbullying, creating, sending or receiving explicit images, the non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images, and other harmful online interactions.
- **Commerce:** Risks associated with online financial activity, including online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams.

The school will respond to online safety concerns in accordance with its safeguarding and child protection procedures. Where a concern indicates that a pupil, member of staff or other individual may be at risk of harm, appropriate action will be taken, including referral to the DSL and other relevant agencies where necessary.

22.4 Use of mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices

School mobile phones and other electronic devices with communication, recording or internet access facilities used for curriculum activities must be appropriately configured, risk assessed and supervised. Pupils will be supported to use such devices safely and responsibly, in accordance with their individual needs and the school's acceptable use arrangements.

Unauthorised or secret use of a mobile phone, camera or other electronic device to record, photograph or film pupils, staff or other individuals is prohibited.

The unauthorised sharing or publication of images, recordings or other material that causes, or is likely to cause, distress or harm will be addressed in accordance with the school's behaviour, safeguarding and disciplinary procedures, as applicable. Where appropriate and safe to do so, the school will require the removal of unauthorised material. Any suspected criminal activity will be referred to the police, and advice will be sought from the DSL and relevant safeguarding agencies, including CEOP where appropriate.

All staff, governors, parents and visitors must follow the school's acceptable use of technology arrangements. Parents and visitors are asked not to use mobile phones within the school building and to take calls or respond to messages outside the building. Where a phone needs to be used for an essential purpose, permission should be sought from a member of staff, and an appropriate location, such as the school office, should be used.

Staff and visitors must follow the school's procedures regarding personal mobile phones and electronic devices. Personal devices must not be carried into classrooms and must be stored securely in the designated locker or cupboard during the school day, unless an authorised exception has been agreed in accordance with school procedures.

Any authorised use of personal devices must be for a legitimate purpose, appropriately risk assessed where necessary, and must not compromise pupil safety, privacy or confidentiality.

22.5 Staff conduct and professional boundaries

Staff are strongly advised not to communicate with parents or carers through personal social networking accounts, including Facebook, or to share personal contact details, such as private telephone numbers, unless an agreed and appropriate arrangement is in place.

Staff must use the school's recognised communication methods when contacting parents and carers, in accordance with the school's relevant policies and procedures, including the Family Involvement Policy and Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement.

The school provides staff with guidance on maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and managing their personal online activity. Staff must not engage in inappropriate online contact or electronic communication with pupils or parents. Any breach of these expectations will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action and/or a safeguarding investigation, in accordance with the school's procedures.

Where a member of staff provides respite care to a pupil outside school, the school recognises that personal contact details may have been shared as part of the agreed arrangement. Staff must maintain professional boundaries at all times. Any communication or contact associated with respite care must remain appropriate, transparent and consistent with agreed safeguarding arrangements.

22.6 Filtering, monitoring and reporting concerns

The school will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements to help protect pupils and staff from harmful online content and activity. These systems will be reviewed regularly and in response to identified safeguarding concerns, changes in technology or changes to the school's risk profile.

All staff will receive appropriate online safety training, including an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, recognising online safety concerns, and reporting and recording incidents.

Staff must report any concerns about inappropriate online content, unsafe use of technology, suspected breaches of filtering or monitoring systems, or other online safety incidents to the DSL and/or the relevant member of staff in accordance with the school's reporting procedures. Any safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL without delay.

The school will record and respond to online safety incidents in accordance with its safeguarding and child protection procedures. Where a concern indicates possible abuse, exploitation or criminal activity, the DSL will ensure that appropriate action is taken, including referral to external agencies where required.

Further information is available in the school's Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and other relevant policies.

23. Statutory School Policies

A full list of statutory policies can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-policies-for-schools>. Note that none of these policies relate to safeguarding and child protection.

School –Virtual Office link: <http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/extranetforschools/info/22/safeguarding>

23.1 Other Recommended Policies

- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour
- Online Safety (Including Acceptable Use) Policies
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Recruitment and Selection
- Whistleblowing

24. Useful Telephone Numbers

If a child is in immediate danger, you should call 999 to contact the police or ambulance

The phone number for all Orchard School contacts is The Orchard School reception number during school hours.

During working hours but outside school hours Lisa Harvey is the Education Representative on the Mash Team – She has the contact numbers of Headteacher and DSL and can contact them when needed.

Role/Agency	Name	Telephone	E-mail
Sandwell MASH (+out of hours)	Social Care	0121 569 3100	
Dudley MASH Team		0300 555 0050	
Birmingham MASH Team		0121 675 1669	
West Midlands Police	Police	101 non-urgent 999 emergency	
Local Authority Child Protection Officers for Education	Lisa Harvey Beverley Need Sian Wellings Jemma Jones	0121 569 8144 07747118729 07775360203 07557173826 07393009664	
LA Designated Officer (LADO)	Social Care	01215694770	sandwell_lado@sandwellchildrenstrust.org
Horizons -Harm outside the home	Safeguarding Team	0121 569 2524/8391	
Children with disabilities team	Social Care	0121 569 5616	Sylvia_gordon1@sandwellchildrenstrust.org
Tipton Strengthening Families Team	Social Care	0121 569 7291 07917 087 966	tipton_strengtheningfamilies@sandwell.gov.uk
Wednesbury Strengthening Families Team		0121 569 7294 07791 921 071	wednesbury_strengtheningfamilies@sandwell.gov.uk
West Bromwich Strengthening Families Team		0121 569 7293 07584 534 015	westbrom_strengtheningfamilies@sandwell.gov.uk

Rowley Strengthening Families Team		0121 569 7296 07799 348 259	rowley_strengtheningfamilies@sandwell.gov.uk
Oldbury Strengthening Families Team		0121 569 7295 07471 029760	oldbury_strengtheningfamilies@sandwell.gov.uk
Smethwick Strengthening Families Team		0121 569 7297 07773 078 189	smethwick_strengtheningfamilies@sandwell.gov.uk
NSPCC helpline NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	NSPCC	0808 800 5000 0800 028 0285	help@nspcc.org.uk
National Counter Terrorism Helpline		0800 789 321	Non-urgent concerns: Prevent_Inbox@sandwell.gov.uk counter.extremism@education.gov CTU_gateway@westmidlands.police.uk

APPENDIX A: Definitions of Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and specific safeguarding issues

Physical Abuse	
Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.	
Possible signs of physical abuse	- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them. - Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games. - Injuries which have not received medical attention. - Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming. - Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation. - The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries.
Possible effects of physical abuse	Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability and in extreme cases death. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties.

Emotional Abuse	
Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve: - Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. - It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. - It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. - It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (including children being exposed to domestic abuse). - 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, though it may occur alone.	
Possible signs of emotional abuse	- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy. - Obsessions or phobias. - Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration. - Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children. - Sleep or speech disorders. - Negative statements about self. - Highly aggressive or cruel to others. - Extreme shyness or passivity. - Running away, stealing and lying.
Possible effects of emotional abuse	If a child suffers sustained emotional abuse, there is increasing evidence of adverse long-term effects on their development. Emotional abuse has a significant impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy and can be as important as the other more visible forms of abuse, in terms of its impact on the child. Domestic abuse, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.

Neglect	
Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy 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.	
Possible signs of neglect	- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice - Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions - Frequently left unsupervised or alone - Frequent diarrhoea - Frequent tiredness - Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints which the carer does not respond to - Frequently hungry - Overeating junk food
Possible effects of neglect	Neglect can seriously impair a child's health, physical and intellectual growth and development, and can cause long term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Extreme cases of neglect can cause death.

Sexual Abuse	
Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. - The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. - They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). - Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.	
Possible signs of sexual abuse	- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse. - The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age. - Sexual activity through words, play or drawing. - Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains. - The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults. - Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home. - Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares which sometimes have overt or veiled sexual connotations. - Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.
Possible effects of sexual abuse	- Disturbed behaviour including self-harm, - Inappropriate sexual behaviour, - Sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem has all been linked to sexual abuse. Its adverse effects may last long into adult life. The severity of the impact on the child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more serious the abuse, the younger the child at the start, and the closeness of the relationship to the abuser. The child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised, can be strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection. Some adults who sexually abuse children were themselves sexually abused as children.

Domestic Abuse
Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. It is in itself, a form of abuse. Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This is often referred to as Teenage Relationship Abuse. If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police

will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day.

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

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

People are 'personally connected' when they are or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

Operation Encompass	Operation Encompass is a police and Education early intervention safeguarding partnership that supports children and young people exposed to Domestic Abuse. It aims to ensure Schools are notified in a timely manner of any Domestic Abuse incident where child/ren are present or registered at the address. This early notification should mean that, in the majority of cases, schools are alerted in readiness for the children arriving at school the first working day following an incident.
Additional Sources of domestic Abuse Advice	<i>The National Domestic Abuse Helpline</i> is available 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form where a time can be booked for a member of the team to call at a safe time. • How to Protect Children From Domestic Abuse NSPCC • Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

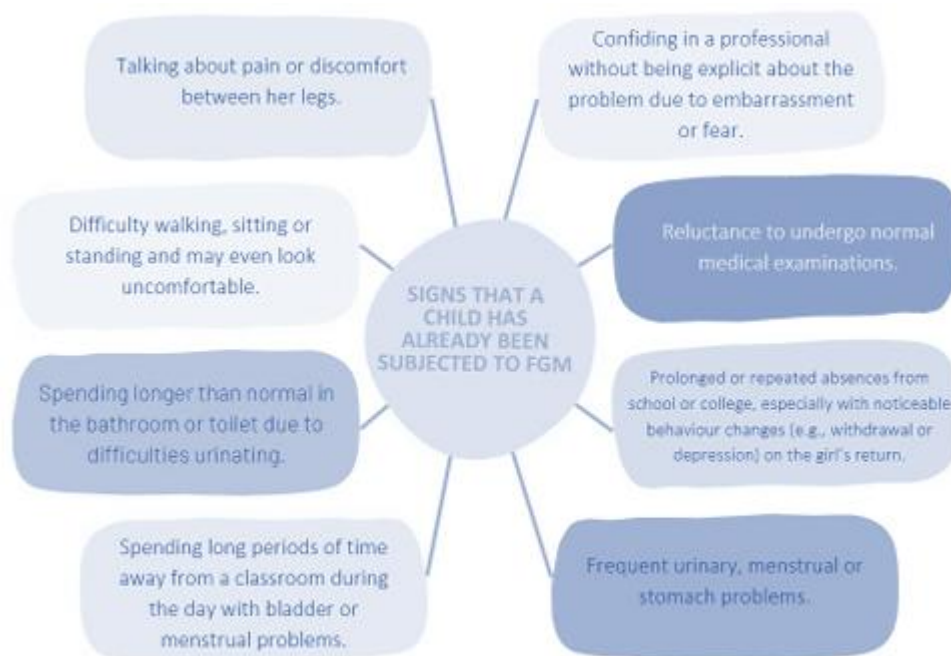
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK.

Types of procedure	There are 4 types of procedure: • Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris • Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora • Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia. • Type 4 other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.
Why is it carried out?	There is a belief that FGM: • Brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage. • Preserves a girl's virginity. • Part of being a woman / rite of passage • Upholds family honour. • Cleanses and purifies the girl. • Gives a sense of belonging to the community. • Fulfils a religious requirement. • Perpetuates a custom/tradition. • Helps girls be clean / hygienic. • Is cosmetically desirable. • Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier.
Mandatory Reporting	There is a mandatory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. (Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015).

	Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Further information can be found in the Multi multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation statutory guidance on female genital mutilation and the female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack particularly section 13.
Intimate Care	At our school, we provide a high level of personal and intimate care and therefore, our staff are more likely than most to witness that a child has been subjected to FGM. If there are physical/visible signs that FGM may have taken place, staff members should alert the police immediately – with support from the DSL.
Worried about FGM	Call the FGM helpline if you're worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM. It's free, anonymous and we're here 24/7. 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk



Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	
The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be found in the guidance document <i>Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners</i> (DfE 2017) Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.	
Possible signs of CSE	• Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation. • Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks. • Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work. • Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late. • Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls. • Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol. • Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections. • Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault. • Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.

	• Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers). • Frequenting areas known for sex work. • Concerning use of internet or other social media. • Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and • Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.
Possible effects of CSE	If a child suffers sustained emotional abuse, there is increasing evidence of adverse long-term effects on their development. Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues. • Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse. • Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example). • Recent bereavement or loss. • Social isolation or social difficulties. • Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality. • Economic vulnerability. • Homelessness or insecure accommodation status. • Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited. • Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work. • Having a physical or learning disability. • Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and • Concerns around Sexual identity.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	
CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.	
Possible signs of CCE	• children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions. • children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation. • children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being. • children who misuse drugs and alcohol. • children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and • children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education
County Lines	County Lines Exploitation is just one form of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) although it can tend to be reported in the media interchangeably with CCE as a whole. County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.
Tools to help	CSE Screening Tool MUST be completed for ALL children aged 10-18 who are subject to an Early Help Assessment or a MARF. For further information see guidance sheets regarding CSE support from CSE team within MASH Complete the CSE Screening Tool when completing a MARF or EHA

Private Fostering	
A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins. Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence. Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual and/or criminal exploitation or modern-day slavery. The school has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility. Staff are trained to advise the DSL when they become aware of a change of living circumstances for any child. Staff should notify the DSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements. On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.	
The Orchard Pupils	Staff should be aware that our students may be even more vulnerable to private fostering arrangements as research suggests that families with children with SEND can struggle to find appropriate childcare and respite. If they do organise a private fostering arrangement, it is likely to be with someone who does not have, for example: • Suitable experience of caring for a child with their specific needs, • Knowledge and experience of dispensing medication correctly, and/or - • Training and experience in providing for complex care needs (e.g. oxygen tubes, feeding tubes, suction for example). It is therefore vital that even if staff are confident that a private foster carer would not intentionally harm the child, private fostering arrangements can cause significant harm to our students. Early reporting is therefore crucial.

Forced Marriage	
Forced marriage is a safeguarding concern, a form of abuse and a serious violation of human rights. It is illegal in the UK and may involve physical, emotional, psychological, sexual or financial abuse, threats, coercion or pressure. A forced marriage occurs when one or both people do not, or cannot, freely and fully consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to make them marry. An arranged marriage involving adults is different, provided both individuals are free to choose whether to proceed. However, an arranged marriage becomes a forced marriage if coercion is used. Since 27 February 2023, it has been a criminal offence in England and Wales to carry out any conduct intended to cause a child under the age of 18 to enter into a marriage, even where violence, threats or other forms of coercion are not used. This includes non-legally binding religious, traditional or customary marriage ceremonies. The legal minimum age for marriage in England and Wales is 18, including where parental consent is given. Forced marriage can affect children and adults of any gender, background or community. Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including those with learning disabilities or communication needs, may face additional barriers to recognising, communicating or reporting abuse. Staff must remain alert to individual vulnerabilities and ensure that all concerns are taken seriously.	
Recognising signs of forced marriage	There is no single indicator of forced marriage. Staff should remain alert to changes in a child or young person's presentation, behaviour, attendance or circumstances, including: • A sudden announcement of an engagement or proposed marriage. • Anxiety, distress, withdrawal or changes in behaviour linked to family expectations, relationships or marriage.

	- Increased absence from school, a planned extended absence or unexplained travel overseas. - A child expressing fear about a family holiday, a change in living arrangements or being taken abroad. - Restrictions on a child's freedom, friendships, communication or independence. - A child disclosing pressure to marry, or expressing concern about the consequences of refusing. - Information from siblings, peers, family members or other professionals suggesting that a child may be at risk. These indicators must be considered in the context of the child's individual circumstances. No single indicator, including an extended family holiday, should automatically be taken as evidence of forced marriage. However, any concern or disclosure must be taken seriously and acted upon in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.
Responding to concerns	Any member of staff who suspects that a child or young person may be at risk of forced marriage must report their concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL, in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff must: - Listen carefully and calmly if a child makes a disclosure, allowing them to communicate in their own way. - Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking to someone and that the concern will be taken seriously. - Avoid making promises of confidentiality and explain that information may need to be shared to help keep them safe. - Record the child's words as accurately as possible, along with relevant observations, and report the concern promptly on My Concern. - Follow the school's safeguarding procedures and the instructions of the DSL. Staff must not approach or contact the child's family or community members about suspected forced marriage, attempt to mediate or arrange family discussions, or investigate the concern themselves. Such actions may increase the risk to the child, including the possibility of travel arrangements being brought forward or the child being placed under greater pressure.
Contact Details	The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) provides advice and support to professionals dealing with forced marriage concerns: - Telephone: 020 7008 0151 (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm) - Email: fm@fcdo.gov.uk - Outside these hours: 020 7008 5000 - Immediate danger: 999

Contextual Safeguarding	
The school is aware that children and young people can face many harms within the family home or within the family unit. This tends to be referred to as 'Intrafamilial harms' and is traditionally how safeguarding was viewed. However, this does not take into account the various and increasing harms facing children outside of the family home/unit. These can be referred to as 'Contextual Safeguarding Risks', part of which are 'extra-familial harms'. It is recognised that as children become older, they are more likely to be affected by the behaviour and attitudes of their peers, rather than their family members. The term 'extra-familial harm' refers to all harm facing children outside of the family home or unit. This can include risks facing them within their own intimate relationships or with their peers. In terms of primary settings, these contextual safeguarding risks may be also to do with the risks facing older siblings and family members. These risks may then impact upon the younger, primary-age child. Therefore, at our school, the DSL works closely with other local organisations including the police, school health nurses, community leaders and other schools to share safeguarding information that will help to safeguard children and young people. Additional information is available on the Contextual Safeguarding Network website: www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk	
According to the NSPCC:	'Contextual safeguarding, which has been developed by Dr Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire's Contextual Safeguarding Network, recognises that as young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family. For example, in school or college, in the local community, in their peer groups or online. Children and young people may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean that children and young people may encounter multiple risks. Contextual safeguarding looks at how we can best understand these risks, engage with children and young people and help to keep them safe.'

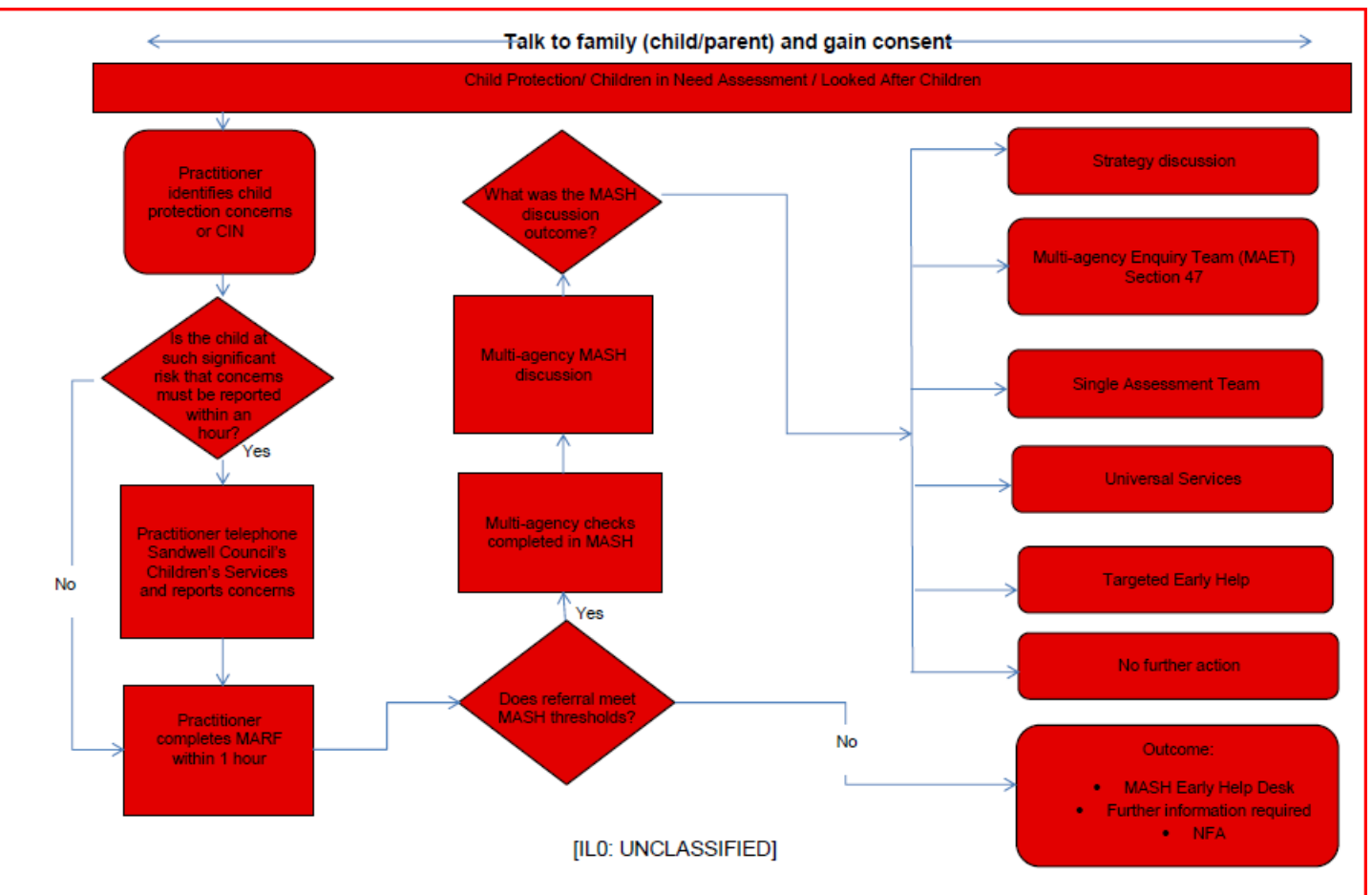
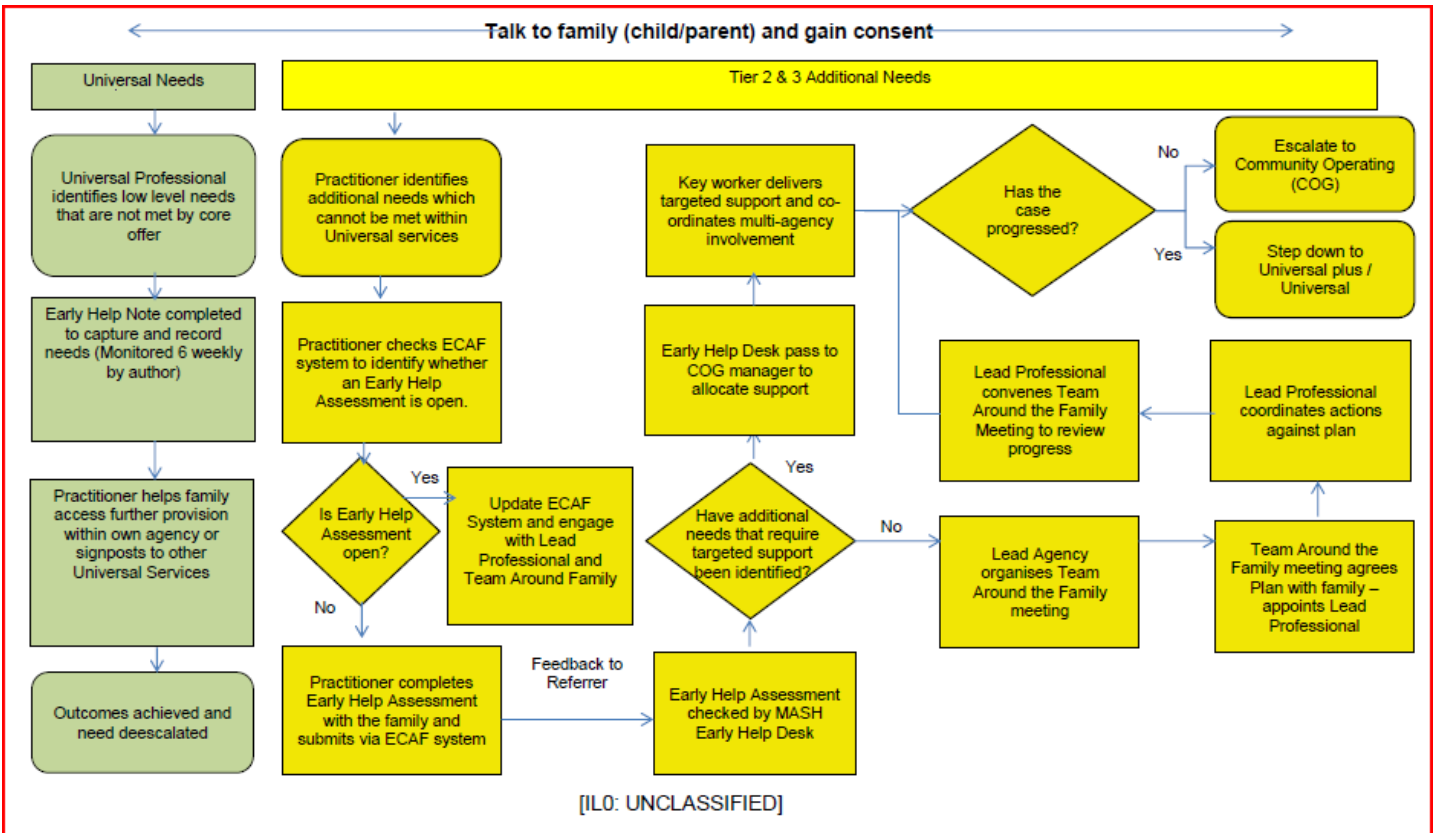
	It's an approach that's often been used to apply to adolescents, though the lessons can equally be applied to younger children, especially in today's changing world.'
	All staff at our school are trained to understand both what a Contextual Safeguarding approach is, as well as to recognise some of the specific contextual safeguarding risks facing our students. These might include: • Crime within the local area • Criminal gang affiliation • Online grooming • Online gambling • Knife crime • Child-on-child abuse within the school

APPENDIX B: Aide-memoire for Professionals to support efficient and appropriate telephone referrals of children who may be suffering, or are likely to suffer, immediate risk of significant harm

Situation 	• I am (give your name / designation / base). I am calling about (child's name(s) / date of birth / address, or mother's details if an unborn child). • I am calling because I believe this child is at risk of harm. • The parents are/aren't aware of the referral.
• I have assessed the child and the specific concerns are (provide specific factual evidence, ensuring the points in Section A are covered) or I fear for the child's safety because (provide specific facts – what you have seen, heard and/or been told). • A Early Help Assessment has/hasn't been completed/ followed prior to this referral. • The child is now (describe current condition and whereabouts) • I have not been able to assess the child but I am concerned because ... • I have (actions taken to make the child safe).	Assessment and Actions 
Family Factors 	• Specific family factors making this child at risk of significant harm are (base on the Assessment of Need Framework i.e. parenting capacity, family/environment, and child's developmental needs) • Additional factors creating vulnerability are ... • Although not enough to make this child safe now, the strengths in the family situation are ...
• In line with "Keeping Safe in Education 2026", "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2026 and Section 17 and/or Section 47 of the Children Act I recommend that a specialist social care assessment is undertaken (urgently?).	Expected Response 
Other recommendations	• Ask: Do you need me to do anything now?
• I will follow up with a written referral (MARF) and would appreciate it if you would get back to me as soon as you have decided your course of action. • Exchange names and contact details with the person taking the referral.	Referral and Recording 

- Now complete the MARF ensuring that it is sent within 1 hour and record details and time and outcomes of telephone referral.

APPENDIX C: Sandwell Safeguarding Process MAP



APPENDIX D: Allegations of abuse made against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contactors.

This applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would 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. (Cross reference to section 8.15)

Staff, parents, and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence).
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the Headteacher (or chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation), the 'case manager' – will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority (LADO). This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police).
- Send a Position of Trust (POT) referral form via the MASH. A MARF for the pupil will be completed if one is involved. These should detail the alleged incident and have all relevant details regards the child and the adult who the allegations have been made about.
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate.
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details.
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate. If it is decided that the

allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be handed back to the employer for consideration via the school's internal procedures.

- **Provide effective support for the individual** facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Employers have a duty of care to their employees. They should act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations and disciplinary process. Support for the individual is key to fulfilling this duty. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and explained the likely course of action unless there is an objection by the local authority social care services or the police. The individual should be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support. They should also be given access to welfare counselling.
- A 24hr Counselling services is available on 01773 814400.
- Inform parents/carers of the child(ren) involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carers who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice.
- Keep parents/carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence).
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency. Where the police are involved, wherever possible the governing body will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution.

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated.

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension.

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this. The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the Headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the Headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil or member of staff who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared?
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/child involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality.
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation.

- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises.

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken, and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above).

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file and provide a copy to the individual.

We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References:

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff.
- The duration of the suspension.
- Whether or not the suspension was justified.
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

APPENDIX E: Safer recruitment and DBS checks

This should be read alongside the Safer Recruitment Policy

- The Orchard school will adopt the safer recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, outlined in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.
- Our school adheres to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, making decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- We will ensure that at least one member of any recruitment panel has received safer recruitment training.
- We expect all staff to have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.
- There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media, or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

For all other staff who have opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, the school requires an enhanced DBS certificate, but not a barred list check.

Single Central Record

Our school keeps a Single Central Record that covers recruitment details for all Staff, Volunteers, Governors, and Agency and third-party staff. It is monitored by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors at termly intervals.

The following information will be recorded on the Single Central Record:

- All identity checks.
- Barred list checks.
- Enhanced DBS check/certificate, and the date this is due for renewal (every 3 years).
- Prohibition from teaching check.
- Section 128 check for governors.
- Criminal record checks for overseas applicants via Home Office on Gov.uk and obtaining a letter of professional standing from the regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked. (Advice about which Professional body is available from [Criminal records checks for overseas applicants - GOV.UK](#))
- Check of professional qualifications; and
- Check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

New staff

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks and satisfactory references. At recruitment of new staff our school will:

- Verify a candidate's identity.
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information), for those who will be engaging in regulated activity).
- Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher.
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, should follow advice on the GOV.UK website.
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school considers appropriate. (Following the guidance in KCSIE 2025)
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Regulations under the Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.
- These checks are relevant to any member of staff who provides care for children under 8 years. For example, an individual will be disqualified where they have committed a relevant offence against a child; been subject to a specified order relating to the care of a child; committed certain serious sexual or physical offences against an adult; been included on the DBS children's barred list; been made subject to a disqualification order by the court; previously been refused registration as a childcare provider or provider or manager of a children's home or had such registration cancelled. A disqualified person is prohibited from providing relevant childcare to under 8s as defined in the Childcare Act 2006 or being directly concerned in the management of such childcare.
- All candidates must inform the Headteacher during the recruitment process of anything that affects their suitability for employment, including any relevant cautions, convictions or relevant orders that they are aware of, or they may have accrued during their employment, and/or they are charged with a criminal offence that would render them disqualified from working with children.
- We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.
- Checks regarding online presence may be considered regarding short-listed candidates. The intention to conduct a simple online search as part of due diligence should be shared with candidates.
- We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these at the end of the interview and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.
- All applicants MUST show their current original DBS certificate to the school as soon as they take up post.

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in conduct that endangers a child or is likely to endanger a child.
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence.

- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

For further details see: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs>

Where the 'harm test' has not been met but there are 'low level' concerns it is crucial that these concerns, are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a visitor badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The Headteacher will exercise professional judgment in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

Volunteers will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be obtained for all volunteers who are working in regulated activity. We will also ensure that they ensure that they are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Governors

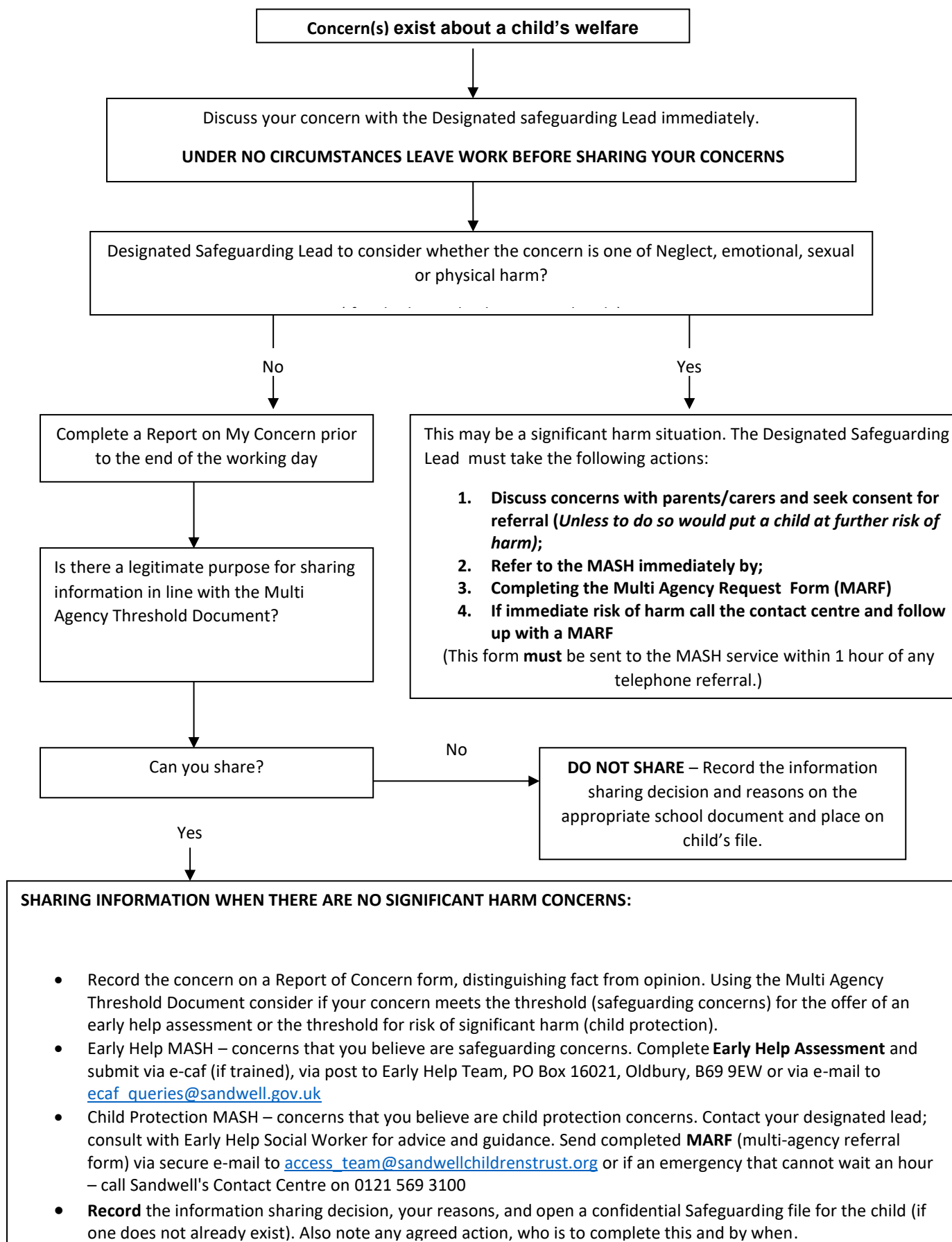
All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity. All governors will also have a section 128 check (as section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own safeguarding policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

APPENDIX F: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare Procedural Flowchart



APPENDIX G: Preventing Violent Extremism – Roles and Responsibilities of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

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

The SPOC for The Orchard School is Lauren Petrie, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware that you are the SPOC in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students/pupils from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism;
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of The Orchard School in relation to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students/pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to students / pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism;
- Collating relevant information from in relation to referrals of susceptible students / pupils into the Channel* process;
- attending Channel* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed;
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel* Co-ordinator; and
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit, and it aims to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify susceptible individuals;
- Safeguard individuals who might be susceptible to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

APPENDIX H: Useful links and resources

[Home - Sandwell CSP](#)

[Sandwell Family Life](#)

[Child Exploitation Toolkit](#)

[County Lines Exploitation Guidance](#)

[CSE Exploitation for Schools](#)

[FINAL-Multi-agency-Practice-Principles-for-responding-to-child-exploitation-and-extrafamilial-harm-Designed-.pdf \(researchinpractice.org.uk\)](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

[criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence>

[Freedom from violence and abuse: a cross-government strategy - GOV.UK](#)

[Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Cyber security: core standard - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[‘Sexting in schools and colleges’.](#)

[Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK](#)

[Generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) in education - GOV.UK](#)

[Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)