



THE DWASTRE

Education Trust

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Publish on Academy websites: Yes

Signed:

Chair of Directors

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are as follows:

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Rattlesden CE Primary Academy - Gemma Cannon, Tel: 01449 736355

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Woolpit Primary Academy – Emma Jones, Tel: 01359 240625

Email: mrs.jones@woolpitprimary.net

These people can also be contacted with any safeguarding concerns at their respective schools:

Each School has alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads. Further details available from each school.

Each school has a named Safeguarding Governor. Further details available from each school.

The Chair of Thedwastre Education Trust is Mr Ryan Temple-Summers c/o Woolpit Primary Academy who is also the Safeguarding lead on behalf of the Board of Directors.

E-mail: chair@thedwastreeducationtrust.org.uk

The Chief Executive of the Trust is Mr Philip Mackay, who is also a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Email: ceo@thedwastreeducationtrust.org.uk

Contact details for Safeguarding Managers who will undertake the role of Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations against all staff, including supply staff, and volunteers are: email on LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk or using the LADO central telephone number 0300 123 2044

Other Useful Contacts:

Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board www.suffolkscb.org.uk

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police: 999

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency www.ceop.org.uk

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

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School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Framework

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interest** of the child.

(Keeping Children Safe in Education)

1. Ethos statement

Safeguarding at every academy within the Thedwastre Education Trust is considered everyone's responsibility and, as such, each academy aims to create the safest environment within which every pupil has the opportunity to achieve. The Trust recognises the contribution it can make in ensuring that all pupils registered or who use our school, feel that they will be listened to and have appropriate action taken to any concerns they may raise. We will do this by endeavouring to work in partnership with other agencies and seek to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers to develop and provide activities and opportunities throughout our curriculum that will help to equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

What this means for every one of us;

- Ensure children and learners are protected from harm and feel safe
- Ensure children know how to complain and understand the process for doing so
- Are effective in preventing and tackling discrimination and bullying including cyber bullying, racist and homophobic bullying
- Apply a consistent approach across the school to the school's behaviour policy
- Take action following a safeguarding incident including online-safety
- Ensure all adults know and understand the indicators that may suggest a child, young person or adult is suffering, or at risk of abuse, exploitation, neglect or harm and take appropriate action in line with local procedures and statutory guidance
- Ensure that all staff understand that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with children and their families
- Respond to the needs of its pupils to prevent the risks of radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- Effectively manage attendance, punctuality, persistent absence and exclusions
- Engage with the local community, including parents, carers, staff and governors
- Always work in the best interest of the child
- Liaise with other agencies which support the child

It is a statutory expectation that Thedwastre Education Trust will have a Safeguarding policy for implementation in all its academies, available on each schools website, Trust website and that this will be reviewed in discussion with the Trust Board annually.

2. Introduction

The Trust recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)

2025, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers, supply staff and contractors and the wider school community. It forms part of the child protection and safeguarding arrangements for our school and is one of a suite of policies and procedures which encompass the safeguarding responsibilities of the school (*school to include appendix detailing school specific linked policies and procedures*).

In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with the schools :

- Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- School's guidance on low-level concerns
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and procedures
- Part Five of KCSiE 2025

Copies of which will be provided to all staff on induction.

The aim of Thedwastre Education Trust's safeguarding policy is to provide a secure framework for each academy in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those pupils who attend. We have developed our policy against:

- The Human Rights Act (1998) - public organisations must respect and protect an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them.
- Equality Act (2010)
- The Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance for schools and colleges, 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2025), which sets out the responsibilities placed on schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children' (Dec 2023), which applies to organisations and professionals who provide services to children
- Information Sharing (May 2024)
- Prevent Duty
- Serious Crime Act 2015 – mandatory reporting of FGM
- Education Inspection Framework (July 2019)
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children (September 2021)
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings – February 2022.
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for educational settings, UK Council for Internet Safety (February 2024)

- Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in schools and Colleges (DfE March 2023)

The policy aims to ensure that:

- All our pupils are safe and protected from harm
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable pupils to feel safe and adopt safe practices
- Staff, pupils, governors, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours and the Trust's legal responsibilities
- All staff are aware of the Trust's safeguarding policies and procedures, including those dealing with allegations against staff and reporting low-level concerns.

Provide staff with a framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and The Trust expects that all staff will have read and understand this child protection and safeguarding policy and their responsibility to implement it. Staff working in regulated activity **must**, as a minimum, have read and understand Part One of [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#). Governors/the proprietor will ensure that they and senior leaders have read and understand Parts One and Two of KCSiE 2025 as a minimum. The Trust will ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children have read either Part One or Annex A of KCSiE 2025 together with Annex B. There may some staff whom The Trust require they read additional sections.

The Trust will ensure that arrangements are in place for all staff members to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The Trust will ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online) at induction which is regularly updated.

Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Headteacher, designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and named safeguarding governor/proprietor.

Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help protect children. Therefore, our schools will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe and are encouraged to talk and be listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.
- Have a clear set of values, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life, which are underpinned by our behaviour policy.
- Create a culture of zero tolerance prejudice behaviour and sexual violence/harassment.

- Through our planned PSHE curriculum, including RES and online safety, which considers the age, SEND and vulnerability of pupils, teach children to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.
- We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways, including bullying, cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, being coerced to send sexual images (sexting), physical abuse and up-skirting. All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

The schools in the Trust will therefore:

- Create a whole school protective ethos in which child on child abuse will not be tolerated.
- Provide training for staff on how to recognise child on child abuse.
- Ensure staff do not dismiss instances of child on child abuse.
- Include information and materials to support the children in keeping themselves safe from abuse in the curriculum.
- Provide high quality RSE, including teaching about giving consent.
- Ensure all staff members follow the procedures outlined in the policy if they become aware of child on child abuse.

Training modules are available from gov.uk (one-stop page)

DfE have also produced guidance on preventing and tackling bullying in schools

3. Statutory framework

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) in the case of maintained schools and pupil referral units, Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 for independent schools (including academies and free schools), the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015, and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended) for post 16 education providers, place a statutory duty on governing bodies and proprietors to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are pupils of the school which must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

In accordance with statutory guidance, [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101421/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2023-statutory-guidance.pdf), local safeguarding arrangements must be established for every local authority area by the three safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Integrated Care Boards). All three partners have joint and equal duty for a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements. In Suffolk, all schools have been named by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) as relevant agencies, this means staff in schools must work in accordance with the multi-agency procedures developed by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) which can be found on their website at: <https://suffolksp.org.uk/>.

4. Key roles and responsibilities

The Trust

The Trust has a strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. The Trust has a legal responsibility to make sure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place, which have regard to statutory guidance, in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare. The Trust will also ensure that the policy is made available to parents and carers by publishing this on the school website or in writing if requested.

The Trust will ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school and ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, and that all systems, processes and policies are transparent, clear and easy to understand and operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

The Trust will ensure that where there is a safeguarding concern school leaders will make sure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems will be in place that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report any form of abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The Trust will ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place.

The Trust will ensure that, as a minimum, the following policies are in place to enable appropriate action to be taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people as appropriate:

- online safety
- behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- special educational needs and disability
- supporting pupils in school with medical conditions
- Staff code of conduct/behaviour policy (which should also include the procedures that will be followed to address low-level concerns and allegations made against staff, whistleblowing and acceptable use of IT, including the use of mobile devices, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.)
- procedure for responding to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions
- safer recruitment

It is the responsibility of the Trust to ensure that staff and volunteers are properly vetted to make sure they are safe to work with the pupils who attend our school and that the school has procedures for appropriately managing safeguarding allegations made against, or low

level concerns involving, members of staff (including the headteacher, supply teachers, contractors, and volunteer helpers).

The Trust will ensure that there is a named governor for safeguarding, a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a senior member of the leadership team and has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, and a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after, or previously looked after, and will ensure that these people have the appropriate training.

The Trust will have regard to their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty).

The Trust will inform Suffolk County Council and the SSP annually about the discharge of their safeguarding duties by completing the safeguarding self-assessment audit.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

It is the responsibility of the DSL to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in school are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency.

'The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.'
(KCSIE 2025)

The DSL is also responsible for arranging whole-school safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with children and young people in the academy and that this training takes place at least every three years.

Claire Ratley (DSL at Great Barton CE Primary Academy) and Sarah Brown (DSL at Woolpit Primary) has attended the annual 'Training for Trainers' programme and are an approved Level 2 safeguarding staff trainer; they are aware that they may receive a monitoring visit from the Professional Advisor or Local Authority delegated staff. They will undertake all basic training in Trust academies.

The DSL at each academy is required to attend, or ensure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate, all conferences, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child at that academy and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

The DSL at each academy is also required to complete a Self-Review Assessment Report annually which demonstrates that the safeguarding arrangements in the academy are being met. If the self-assessment highlights any areas for improvement, this will be detailed in the action plan which will be signed off and monitored by the Named Governor for safeguarding to ensure these improvements are implemented. The self-review assessment is to be shared annually with the Local Authority, who will have an auditing role in ensuring the

school/education setting is meeting its safeguarding requirements under sec 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 for both maintained and independent schools.

The DSL or DDSL must always be available during school hours, during term time to discuss any safeguarding issues and staff are clear about what to do if neither are available. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from social care (KCSIE 2025). All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on immediately. If academy staff are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, and ensure that all information is recorded on the appropriate form.

DSL should liaise with the three safeguarding partners (local authority, clinical commissioning group and police) as appropriate and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 as well as liaising with senior mental health support teams when a safeguard concern is linked with mental health.

DSLs will need to familiarise themselves when safeguarding partners publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided.

DSLs are responsible for ensuring that the DfEs filtering and monitoring standards are met and have primary responsibility for understanding the existing monitoring and filtering systems and processes. All academies in the trust have designated member of SLT and governor who leads filtering and monitoring.

DSLs will need to refer to PACE Code C 2019 (Police Criminal Evidence Act) when they have a child under police investigation and ensure there is an appropriate adult present whilst a child is being questioned or searched.

DSLs are responsible for keeping child protection records that are kept up to date, stored securely and kept confidential. Records should have a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concerns was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken (and reasons for that decision made), decisions reached and outcomes.

The school also has an alternative/alternate DSLs who are trained to the same standard as the DSL.

Headteacher

The headteacher will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and that sufficient resources, time and training are provided to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities and contribute effectively to a whole school approach to safeguarding.

The headteacher will be responsible for ensuring a culture of safety and ongoing vigilance that fosters the belief that 'it could happen here'.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff working in regulated activity with children must read and ensure they understand at least Part One of KCSiE 2025. Those staff that do not work directly with children must read and ensure they understand either at least Part One or Annex A of KCSiE 2025. *(School to determine stance on this and ensure it is accurately reflected in school CP policy)*

All staff must ensure they are familiar with the systems within school which support safeguarding, including the child protection and safeguarding policy, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, the behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies). These will be explained to all staff on induction.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may need help or protection. All staff should maintain a belief that 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately.

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, neglected or exploited, and/or is otherwise at risk of involvement in criminal activity, such as knife crime, or involved in county lines drug dealing.

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

All staff should be aware of, and understand their role within the [Family Support — Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership](#) and [Early Help Assessment \(EHA\) - Suffolk County Council](#) for all services, at both a Local Authority and school or college level. This includes providing support as soon as a problem emerges, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals in order to support early identification and assessment, focussing on providing interventions to avoid escalation of worries and needs (see Section 12: Information Sharing). In some cases, staff may be asked to act as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for early help can be found in [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs

- has special educational needs (SEN) (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- is a privately fostered child

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from children's social care [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) - Suffolk County Council](#) Consultation Line. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible. Details of the school's safeguarding team are on the front this policy.

5. Induction & Training

The Trust will ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety, which amongst other things includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership, including the [SSP Training Overview](#) and the [Online Safety Toolkit](#). In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and up to date knowledge of emerging and evolving safeguarding issues to safeguard children effectively.

This training will be regularly updated and in line with advice from the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership, including the SSP Training Overview and the Online Safety Toolkit.

All new staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training on the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, online safety, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, low-levels concerns guidance, the behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, and the role of the designated safeguarding lead. Copies of the school's policies, procedures and

Part One of KCSiE 2025 (or Annex A for those staff who do not work directly with children) will be provided to new staff at induction.

The Trust will ensure that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

The Headteacher will ensure that an accurate record of safeguarding training undertaken by all staff is maintained and updated regularly.

In considering safeguarding training arrangements, the Trust will also have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and require teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

- All members of staff and volunteers will have access to whole-school Child Protection training at least every two years (in addition, staff have 2 yearly online safety training) and have yearly updates.
- In addition, it is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the completion and record of a risk assessment must happen for all volunteers.
- It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that if staff are employed from alternative providers written confirmation must be recorded on vetting checks.
- We will also, as part of our induction, issue information in relation to our Child Protection policy, require the member of staff to read (and sign to say they have read) it Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (Part One and Annex A, which gives information about current safeguarding issues) and any other policy related to safeguarding, and promote our commitment to ensuring the safety of children/young people in our care. Staff training will include their roles and responsibilities in relation to the schools filtering and monitoring systems and procedures and training related to cyber security.

These policies must include:

- The Child Protection Policy
 - The Behaviour Policy
 - The staff behaviour policy/Code of Conduct
 - School's response to children who go missing in education
 - The role of the designated safeguarding lead
 - Guidance for Safer Working Practice, 2019
 - Whistle-Blowing policy
 - Acceptable use ICT agreement
 - Guidance of social networks and smartphones.
- All staff will be issued with regular updates through bulletins and staff updates. Notifications will be available on the staff notice board (safeguarding area).
 - Staff will complete termly safeguarding and child protection refreshers to ensure they keep up to date with current issues and school policies and procedures. Gaps in staff knowledge can then be addressed.
 - Substantive differences in KCSiE September 2025 can be found in Annex F.

- If relevant and required, staff are updated with issues surrounding safeguard situations in school on a weekly basis in staff meetings.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads and Alternates will undertake further safeguarding training in addition to the whole school training. This will be undertaken at least every two years which updates their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues. This will support both the DSL/Alternate to be able to better undertake their role and support the Trust in ensuring that our safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieve better outcomes for the pupils in our academies. Designated Safeguarding Leads and Alternate Safeguarding Leads are required to attend higher level training every three years called 'Working Together to Safeguard Children Level 3 (Multi-agency)'.
- All governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is regularly updated.
- Each school has a named Governor for Safeguarding who will undertake additional training at least every two years to support their employers' role in Handling Allegations against adults who work with children and young people, including our staff and volunteers. Governors must be trained separately from staff.
- Governing bodies and proprietors should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (KCSIE, 2025)
- All staff will be issued with Part 1 of the DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' (or Annex A if they do not directly work with children) and are required to sign that they have received and read a copy. All staff and volunteers will be required to follow the Trust's Code of Conduct and will be required to sign that they have received a copy of the document. This will be on display in each academy for staff and volunteers.
- Our safeguarding arrangements are reported on a termly basis to our Governing body and our Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation.
- We will include a summary of our Safeguarding Policy to parents in our academy prospectus/website and will post copies of our policy throughout each academy. We are also able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English on request.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

It is a requirement for all agencies to ensure that all staff recruited to work with children and young people are properly selected and checked (see Safer Recruitment Policy). In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, we consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview. We are required to notify shortlisted candidates these searches may be conducted as part of the pre recruitment checks.

Thedwastre Education Trust will ensure that we have a member on every recruitment panel who has received the appropriate recruitment and selection training, that all of our staff are appropriately qualified and have the relevant employment history and checks to ensure they are safe to work with children in compliance with the Key Safeguarding Employment

Standards. All appointments are conditional until satisfactory completion of all mandatory pre-employment checks have been carried out, including checking they are not subject to a prohibition order, professional qualifications, right to work in the UK and further checks if the person has lived or worked outside the UK. It is made clear that staff are expected to disclose any relationship (in the real world or online) that may impact on the school's ability to safeguard pupils. Copies of these documents are kept in their personal files.

The Wastre Education Trust requires a 'section 128 direction' check to be carried out on anyone involved in the management of an academy (either as an employee or a governor/trustee). Checks for section 128 directions can be carried out via the Teacher Services system, and are also covered by Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) barred list checks. It is best practice to check the name on a potential employee's birth certificate. Copies of the DBS certificates do not have to be kept but the date of the check and the date seen by the academy must be recorded on the SCR.

6. Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and alternates) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or deputy.

Indicators of abuse and neglect

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be

particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

The following indicators listed under the categories of abuse are not an exhaustive list:

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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

Signs that indicate emotional abuse include:

- Excessively clingy or attention seeking
- Very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism
- Lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please
- Eating disorders or self-harm
- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons

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

procedures for dealing with it. (See section 7: Specific safeguarding issues) *[schools should cross-reference their school policy/procedures for dealing with child-on-child abuse within the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).*

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

(Source [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#))

Extra-familial harm

All staff will consider whether children are at risk or abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Staff will address indicators of child criminal activity through training and follow procedures set out in this policy if concerns arise.

General signs and symptoms of abuse:

For all ages:

- Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.
- Poor bond or relationship with a parent, also known as attachment.
- Acts out excessive violence with other children.
- Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- Mental health problems.

Under 5s:

- Doesn't cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age.
- Reaches developmental milestones late, such as learning to speak, with no medical reason.
- Significantly underweight but eats well when given food.

Ages 5-11:

- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- Reluctant to go home after school.
- Unable to bring friends home or reluctant for professionals to visit the family home.
- Poor school attendance and punctuality, or late being picked up.

- Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school.
- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns.
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.
- Wets or soils the bed.

Taken from the NSPCC website, for further information: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/>

7. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as of drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines) radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

Child-on-child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there no reports in school it does not mean it's not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to the DSL (or deputy) and record these using the school CPOMS's safeguarding system.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse

- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

All staff should be clear about the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they must play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

'Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges and is a widespread issue, although it is more widespread with girls being the victim. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. They can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable'.

Sexual violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools (DfE 2021)

Being subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment may breach any or all human rights and rights of the Equality Act. It is important that children understand that the laws on child on child abuse are there to protect them rather than criminalise them.

Sexual Violence includes:

- Rape (sexual intercourse without consent. The age of consent is 16 and a child under 13 can never give consent)
- Assault by penetration
- Sexual assault (kissing or touching breasts/genitalia)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (making someone strip, touch themselves sexually or engage in sexual activity with a third person)
- HSB (harmful sexual behaviour) is when abusive and violent sexual behaviour which is developmentally inappropriate, causes developmental damage and possibly involves a perpetrator who is at least 2 years older than the victim
- Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded and humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive and sexualised environment. It can include (although not an exhaustive list):
- Sexual comments (calling someone sexualised names, sexual remarks about clothing, rude jokes and stories)
- Sexual taunting
- Physical behaviour- purposefully brushing up against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, showing sexual pictures, drawing and photos
- Online sexual harassment (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos, sharing unwanted explicit content, upskirting (illegal), sexualised online bullying (including on social media), unwanted sexual comments and messages, sexual exploitation, coercion and threats)

Children must know who to and feel able to talk to someone if an incident occurs and all reports of sexual violence or harassment should be taken seriously, reported to a DSL, not be dismissed as 'banter' or 'boys being boys' (such as touching breasts, flicking bras, pulling down trousers or lifting skirts) and dealt with in line with this policy and our safeguarding procedures, whether they have occurred inside or outside school and online. We will be mindful that this may not be an isolated incident. We have a zero tolerance for these types of behaviours. Whilst we acknowledge that there are developmental typical behaviours, which are developmentally expected and socially acceptable, any inappropriate sexual behaviour should be addressed before it becomes problematic sexual behaviour (PSB).

Children who are victims of sexual violence and harassment will find the experience distressing and it is likely to have adverse effects on their educational outcomes. It can also be an indication of other safeguarding issues such as child exploitation. Through our RSE curriculum, children are taught about being safe, including online and about respectful relationships.

All victims must feel they are being listened to, taken seriously despite how long ago the incident occurred, supported and kept safe and never to be made to feel ashamed or causing a problem. We are aware that children with SEND are more likely to be abused and have additional barriers such as behaviours which may be mis-read and communication issues. LGBT (and those mistakenly thought to be LGBT) children are also more likely to be targeted. We understand that some children may be more at risk from this type of abuse outside school due to family situations. We are also aware that children may find it hard to report an incident and staff are trained to be aware of changes in behaviour. Reports of an incident may also be given by a friend or overheard by a member of staff.

It is also important to realise that perpetrators may also be victims of abuse and should not only be sanctioned but given education and safeguarding support.

When dealing with an incident, the DfE guidance, 'Sexual violence and Sexual harassment Between Children in School', will be used to ensure it is dealt with in the correct way, depending on the nature of the incident. This will include:

- Getting (and working with) agencies or social care involved to the victim;
- If possible having two members of staff when dealing with an incident.
- Recording facts, not opinions
- Not promising confidentiality
- Informing parents unless it puts the child at risk.
- Reporting rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault to the police.
- Writing a risk assessment if a report of sexual violence has been made (consider the risks of victim or victims, other children at school from future harm and the time and location of the incident and how to make that location safe)
- Considering victims wishes, natures of incident, ages of children, SEND, one-off or sustained, on-going risks, and wider links to other safe-guarding issues
- Considering the impact of the incident and how the other children may deal with it, e.g. Social media.
- Consider removing a child's perpetrator from class if they are in the same class.
- Consider the intra-familial harms after an incident, especially necessary support for siblings.
- Responses can be handled:
- Managed internally (one-off/harassment). Always have zero tolerance and follow the behaviour policy. Record all discussion and decisions.

- Early Help non-violent HSB and to prevent escalation of sexual violence. Record all discussion and decisions.
- Referral to Children's Social Care if a child has been harmed, risk of harm or immediate danger. Record all discussion and decisions.
- Report to police generally is social care are involved or rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault. Record all discussion and decisions.

If a report is false or unfounded, consider if the person making the report needs help. If deliberate, consider disciplinary action. Victims will need continued support and safeguarding, especially for HSB. Lots of resources in full guidance on page. The perpetrator will also need to be given the correct support as well as disciplinary action. Good practice to work with parents.

County Lines

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit for Professionals.

Children and the Court System

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/708114/ywp-5-11-eng.pdf

Children with family members in prison

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

An estimated 200,000 children every year have a parent in prison in England and Wales and 10,000 visits are made by children to our public prisons every week. NICCO lists comprehensive information from voluntary and statutory agencies across England and further afield. The three Directories enable practitioners to search for Services, Resources or Research to inform their practice with children and families of offenders. Drugs (County Lines) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any alternates) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new

place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

The following safeguarding concerns actual or suspected should be referred immediately to Children's Social Care. The concerns featured below are linked to guidance and local procedures which, where available, can be found on the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board website at: www.suffolkscb.org.uk.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in [Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners - GOV.UK](#)

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- 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.
- 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to having sex being coerced into engaging in sexual activities (some children may not realise they are being exploited).

Domestic Abuse

The Government defines domestic abuse as 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, coercive, and controlling) between people over the age of 16 who are or have been personally connected, including intimate partners and ex-partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality'. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). Teenage relationship abuse is a form of child on child abuse. However, if they are under the age of 16, this may not be recognised under the law as 'domestic abuse' as well as child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Domestic abuse is likely to have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn and in some cases a child may blame themselves for the abuse or had to leave home as a result. It will often be appropriate for such children to be regarded as Children in Need under the Children Act 1989.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children and defines them as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Where there is evidence of domestic violence, The Wastre Education Trust will require DSLs to report concerns to the appropriate agencies, including children's social care and the police, in order to prevent the likelihood of any further abuse taking place.

If there are any concerns about the safety or welfare of the child, child safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Private fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made between the parent and the private foster carer, who then becomes responsible for caring for the child in such a way as to safeguard and promote his/her welfare.

A privately fostered child means a child under the age of 16 (18 if a disabled child) who is cared for more than 28 days and where the care is intended to continue and provided with accommodation by someone other than:

- A parent.
- A person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility.
- A close relative.
- A Local Authority.

It is a statutory duty to inform the local authority where we are made aware of a child or young person who may be subject to private fostering arrangements.

Children who have returned home to their family from care

The schools within the Trust recognise that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and the school will vigilantly monitor the welfare of these children and notify social care as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

Children Living with Substance Misusing Parents/Carers

Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with significant harm to children.

Factors that may be present are:

- Use of family resources to finance a parent's dependency, leading to inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children.
- Children exposed to unsuitable visitors.
- Effects of alcohol or drugs leading to inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour.
- Emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance. • Unsafe storage of drugs or alcohol.
- Possible foetal alcohol syndrome.
- When the school receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedure.

Young Carers

Our schools recognise that children who are living in a home environment, which requires them to act as a young carer for a family member or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol can increase their vulnerability and that they may need additional support and protection. The school will seek to identify young carers and offer internal support as well as signpost external agencies. They will also be particularly vigilant to the welfare of young carers and follow procedures set out in this policy.

Children Misusing Drugs or Alcohol

The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but will consider action if there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe:

- The misuse may cause them to be vulnerable to abuse.
- The misuse is a result of abuse or criminality.
- The misuse is linked to a parent/carer's substance misuse.
- The misuse indicates an urgent health concern.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy) regarding any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession,

discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Mental Health

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

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Staff can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support; this includes working with external agencies.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the school's policy, and speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

Preventing radicalisation

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach. For further information see Page 157 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. For further information see Page 158 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

Visiting speakers

It is the responsibility of the headteacher of each academy to ensure that any visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised at all times. A risk assessment should be in place for any one- off volunteers. Prior to a visit, the purpose and content of the session must be agreed, and, ideally, submitted in advance. ID and DBS checks must be made (or ensure their employer has confirmed these have been checked).

Forced marriage/Child Marriage

It is a crime to purposefully cause a child to marry before the age of 18 (this applies to legal and nonbinding marriages). The DfE Education Trust will follow SCB procedures to refer any child and young person immediately to Children's Social Care if we are aware this has taken place.

Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at the right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Honour based violence

Honour Based Violence 'is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'. It is important to be alert to signs of distress and indications such as self-harm, absence from school and truancy, infections resulting from female genital mutilation, isolation from peers, being monitored by family, not participating in school activities, unreasonable restrictions at home or forced marriage. Where it is suspected that a child/young person is at risk from Honour Based Violence, the DSL will report those concerns to the appropriate agency in order to prevent this form of abuse taking place.

Trafficked children

Child trafficking involves moving children across or within national or international borders for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation includes children being used for sex work, domestic work, restaurant/ sweatshop, drug dealing, shoplifting and benefit fraud. Where an academy is made aware of either the suspicion of being trafficked/exploited, or actually being trafficked/exploited, the DSL will report the concerns to the appropriate agency.

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents, family members, people known but not related to the victim, and strangers.

Other community safety incidents may include people loitering around the vicinity of the school or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As part of our PSHE curriculum, children, especially as they get older and have more independence are given practical advice about how to keep themselves safe, giving them the ability and confidence to deal with situations. Community Police may be invited to talk to the children if needed.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

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

Information on signs to look for and support for victims can be found in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance on gov.uk.

Cyber Crime

All academies in the Trust aim to meet the cyber security standards set out by the DfE, including:

- appropriate firewall protection
- multi-authentication on sensitive information
- anti-malware protection
- security checks on downloads

- up-to-date security software installed and enabled on all authorised devices
- back-up copies of important data
- a recovery plan in response to a cyber-attack
- reporting cyber security attacks
- risk assessment of personal data held
- Cybercrime is a criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. There are two categories
- Cyber-enabled (crimes which can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on line)
- Cyber-dependent (crimes which can only be committed using a computer). Cyber dependent crimes include: unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'); denial of service attacks (DoS or DDos or 'booting') where attempts are made to make a network, computer or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic; and making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets, and remote access trojans with the intent to commit further offensives.

Children with a particular skill or interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL should consider referring into the Cyber Choices program.

Parents are sent information and information can be found on the school's website about this issue. The older children in our school are made aware of the criminality of these crimes.

Abuse linked to faith and beliefs

Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be considered is the use of any physical or psychological violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is abusive and will result in a criminal conviction of those using this form of abuse even if the intention is to help the child.

Sexually active under eighteen years old.

It is acknowledged by those working with young people that some young people under the age of 18 will have an interest in sex and sexual relationships. The Protocol for Sexually Active Young People under 18 years old has been designed to assist those working with children and young people to identify where these relationships may be abusive, and the children and young people may need the provision or protection of additional services. Thedwastre Education Trust will ensure our policy for managing this issue links to the available protocol.

Safeguarding children and young people linked to gang activity

Thedwastre Education Trust will endeavour to protect all children and young people from exposure to gang activity and exploitation by having robust attendance and behaviour policies and to act on relevant information or allegations. We will take all reports seriously and will share this information appropriately with other agencies to safeguard our pupils from harm.

The above list is not exhaustive and as new policy guidance and legislation develops within the remit of Safeguarding we will review and update our policy as appropriate and in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Local Authority to ensure all academies within the Trust are safe places to learn and work.

8. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

The Trust recognises that whilst all children should be protected there are some groups of children who are potentially at greater risk of harm and, in some cases, these children may find it difficult to communicate what is happening to them.

[Alternative Provision]

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

- Schools should obtain written confirmation from alternative provision providers that the necessary safeguarding and employment checks have been completed for all staff in line with statutory guidance.
- Schools should also be advised about any changes that might put the child at risk, e.g. staff changes, so the school can make sure appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out.
- Schools must know where a child is during school hours, including the address of any alternative provider, subcontracted provision or satellite site.
- Schools should regularly review the alternative provision placements, at least half termly.
- Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary.

The management committee/proprietor recognises that the cohort of pupils in alternative provision often have complex needs and are/is aware of the additional risk of harm our pupils may be vulnerable to.

The management committee/proprietor will have regard to the following statutory guidance: [Arranging Alternative Provision - guide for LAs and schools](#) and [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school – DfE Statutory Guidance](#)

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to complex safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The Trust expects that the Local Authority will share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both LAs and school to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or to a child missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Children absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- . Are at risk of harm or neglect
- . Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- . Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- . Come from the families of service personnel
- . Go missing or run away from home or care
- . Are supervised by the youth justice system
- . Cease to attend a school
- . Come from new migrant families

It is important that the school's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education are followed, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to LA children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where absence from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. As such, all staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures as per the attendance policy and SCC protocol, found [here](#)

This includes informing the LA if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the LA, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Further information and support include:

- Schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the LA when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points can be found in the DfE's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education - Guidance](#)
- General information and advice for schools can be found in the Government's [Missing Children and Adults Strategy](#).
- Further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time enrolment of 14- to 16-year-olds in further education and sixth-form colleges: 2025 to 2026 academic year - GOV.UK](#)

- Guidance for schools concerning children who are absent from education [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

Elective Home Education

Many home educated children have a positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all. Elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education and are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with the LA and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

Ideally this would be before a final decision has been made to, ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan in place the LA will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers.

Children requiring mental health support

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

The Trust will ensure there is a clear system and process in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate, and a clear referral and accountability system. *[school systems and processes for identification and routes to escalation should be included in the Procedures section of your CP policy].*

Staff can access further advice in a DfE guidance documents [Preventing and tackling bullying](#) and [mental health and behaviour in schools](#), which set out how staff can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of pupils.

[where there is a senior mental health lead role in your school] The school's senior mental health lead will be a member of, or be supported by, the senior leadership team.

Looked after children and previously looked after children.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The Trust will ensure staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

The Trust will ensure there are arrangements in place so that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

Appropriate staff will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The DSL should

have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. The Trust recognise that when dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

For children who are care leavers, the DSL should have details of the LA Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver and liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

Children with SEN and disabilities, or health issues can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline.

Staff should avoid making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury may relate to the child's disability or medical condition without further exploration.

Staff should also be aware that these children may be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. Similarly, staff should be aware of the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying without outwardly showing signs or being able to communicate how they are feeling.

Staff also need to be mindful of children's cognitive understanding, for example, whether they can understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and the consequences of repeating the content/behaviours in school.

As such, any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL and SENCO.

Further information can be found in the DfE's:

- [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#), and
- [Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions](#)
- [Children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\) | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [NSPCC - Safeguarding child protection/deaf and disabled children and young people](#)

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

Revised guidance on gender questioning children is expected this summer. If published, we will signpost to this guidance in September 2025. In the absence of confirmed guidance the following guidance is available [GQC Draft Guidance — Trans and Non-Binary Education](#)

The Trust acknowledge that the fact that a child or young person may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning can be targeted by other

children. In some cases, a child who is perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

Risks can be compounded where children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. Staff should therefore endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

9. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

The Trust will ensure that children and young people are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The Trust recognise that effective education should be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with SEND.

Relevant topics will be included within Relationships Education (*primary schools*) and Relationships and Sex Education (also known as Sex and Relationship Education) (*secondary schools*) and through Health Education (*all pupils in state funded schools*), having regard to statutory guidance.

Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares children and young people for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment.

The Trust expect that the school's values and standards should be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. This whole-school approach will be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, and will tackle (in age-appropriate stages) issues such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise and abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- The concepts of, and laws relating to – sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM, and how to access support, and
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

10. Online safety and filtering and monitoring

The Wastre Education Trust's Online-Safety policy clearly states that mobile phone or electronic communications with a pupil is not acceptable other than for approved academy business e.g. Coursework, mentoring. Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse or cyber bullying we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

We have regular online safety training and staff and pupils sign an ICT acceptable use agreement annually (copies are sent home to parents and are available on our website) and we have policies in place for the use of ICT, smartphones and use of social media for both pupils and staff. Appropriate internet security and filters are in place.

Children at our school are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. We have an effective whole school approach to online safety, which enables us to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. Technology and the harms which relate to it, evolve and change rapidly therefore we review our approach to online safety annually.

If pupils are expected to access websites at home as part of the curriculum, the class teacher will communicate this with parents.

Online safety issues can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, for example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising, and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images, and online bullying); and
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If staff feel that either they or pupils are at risk this should be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

The Trust will ensure that an annual review is undertaken of the school's approach to online safety including the school's filtering and monitoring provision, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks pupils face online. The review should include a member of the senior leadership team, the DSL, the IT service provider and a governor. The school should ensure they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on cyber security including considerations can be found at [Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

Filtering and Monitoring

We do all that we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, we ensure we have appropriate filters

and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. Our leadership team and computing lead have an awareness and understanding of the filtering and monitoring standards set out by the DfE (March 2023) and the provisions in place, their limitations and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. Our filtering systems are provided by our internet provider.

We are careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

More information can be found on the UK Safer Internet Centre website (appropriate filtering and monitoring) and SWGfL (South West Grid for Learning).

The school’s online safety policy outlines the appropriate filtering and monitoring which take places on school devices and school networks. It also outlines the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation filtering and monitoring.

The Department for Education’s [filtering and monitoring standards](#) set out that schools and colleges should:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

The Department has published [Generative AI: product safety expectations](#) to support schools to use generative artificial intelligence safely and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education.

School staff can access resources, information and support as set out in Annex B of KCSiE 2025.

Sharing of nudes or semi-nudes

Also known as sexting, youth produced sexual imagery, indecent imagery or image-based sexual abuse and can also be digitally manipulated or AI-generated (deep fakes or deep nudes).

The making and sharing of nudes and semi-nudes or any indecent image, of children under the age of 18 is illegal, even if it was consensual. This includes images of themselves. Images may be shared between children under a wide range of circumstances and are not always sexually or criminally motivated or harmful. They may have also been created and shared consensually. However, it is also possible that such images may have been created and shared without consent, under coercive situations, or to be used as blackmail or to intend harm.

As with all safeguard concerns, incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible and dealt with in line with the school’s safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. Parents and carers should be informed as early as possible, as long as it does not put the child at risk of harm and a referral made to children’s social services and/or police immediately if there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm.

It is important that each situation is considered on a case-by-case basis to determine the reason the image was shared and dealt with proportionally. Consideration as to whether it is harmful behaviour and/or underage sexual activity and whether it requires an onward referral to social services and police as a criminal and safeguarding concern if there is risk of harm. If we deem there to be no risk or not harmful, in order to avoid unnecessary criminalisation

of children, we may respond to an incident without involving the police. Once determined the child is not at immediate risk, a conversation with the child to determine the nature of the image and who it has been shared with should follow.

When a situation of consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes arises, it is vital that we support the young person in identifying healthy and unhealthy relationships, understanding consent and the law regarding the making and sharing of these images. It should also be considered whether the situation raises any additional concerns. Consideration should be given to how far the image has been shared, how old the child is and the child's vulnerability so this can be dealt with appropriately.

If dealing with searching a screen, you should refer to our behaviour policy for searching and confiscating and be aware of advice from the DfE. In most cases, indecent images should not be viewed. Images should also not be copied, saved, printed or shared or a child should not be asked to do so. This is illegal. If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL must be satisfied that:

- It was unavoidable (child shows you without warning)
- It is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies as the facts cannot be established from the child

It is necessary to report it to a website, app or reporting agency to have it taken down or support a child or parents or carer in making a report.

If this is the case then:

- The DSL should discuss it with the headteacher or SLT
- Viewing should be undertaken by the DSL or another member of the SG team with delegated responsibility from the headteacher or SLT
- Viewing should be done with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the headteacher or member of SLT. This member of staff does not need to view the image.
- Viewing should take place on the school premises, ideally in the headteacher or member of SLT's office.
- Viewing should whenever possible be done by a member of staff the same sex as the child in the images.
- A record of how and why the decision was made to view the image, who viewed and who was present and any subsequent actions.

If a member of staff has viewed imagery then support should be offered. It may be necessary to confiscate the device to give to the police for evidence (if this is done, disconnect from the Wi-Fi so images cannot be deleted remotely and turn off immediately). Place the device in a secure place, preferably a locked cupboard until the police collect it. If no other agencies are to be involved, images should be deleted (preferably by child and given a time to do this by - a search can be made to check this and a reminder that possession of these images is illegal). Consider if the image or video has been shared more widely than intended and what action needs to be taken, for example others who have been sent the images will need to delete it from their accounts and devices and may need to use IWF to remove images which have been shared online.

Online hoaxes and harmful challenges

A hoax is a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful. The internet and social media provide a perfect platform for hoaxes, especially hoaxes about challenges or trends that are said to be harmful to children and young people to spread quickly. An online challenge will generally

involve users recording themselves taking a challenge and then distributing the resulting video through social media sites, often inspiring or daring others to repeat the challenge. Whilst many will be safe and fun, others can be potentially harmful and even life threatening.

Our online safety curriculum provides opportunities and a safe space for children to learn, ask questions and critically respond to upsetting or harmful content online, which is appropriate for their age and stage of development.

If we become aware of an online hoax or harmful challenge, we will consider each one on a case-by-case basis, assessing the facts, potential risks to our pupils and establishing if it is local or national. Advice should be sought from either the local police if it is local or from the UK Safer Internet Centre Helpline if it is national. Our response will be calm and measured and avoid creating panic or confusion. We will avoid unnecessarily and needlessly upsetting our pupils by highlighting and exposing them to distressing content. If we are confident that a child is aware of, and engaged in, a real challenge that may be putting them at risk of harm, then this will be directly addressed and we would carefully consider how best to do this in order to support them. It may be appropriate to offer focussed support to a particular age group or individual children at risk. Many of the children may not have seen it and may not be aware of it, therefore we will carefully weigh up the benefits of a school wide highlighting of the potential harms related to a challenge against needlessly increasing children's exposure to it. This could potentially be counterproductive and potentially harmful.

If it has been raised directly, we will acknowledge whatever the latest harmful online challenge or online hoax might be but avoid overly focusing on it. We will aim to focus on what good online behaviour looks like, what to do if you see something upsetting online and who and where to report it.

Parents may be anxious if they become aware of online hoaxes and challenges and we will communicate with them to reassure them and explain our approach, whilst not making the situation worse. We have advice for parents on our webpage regarding online safety and good online behaviours and also send relevant information and helpful messages home regularly to encourage discussion at home about online safety, especially how and where to report concerns about harmful online content and how to block users.

11. Procedures

If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child or young person may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record their concerns on the school's safeguarding management system and pass it to the DSL without delay.

What to do if you are concerned

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child/young person to talk freely – do not interrupt or put words in the child/young person's mouth.
- Only ask questions when necessary to clarify, do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Reassure the child, but don't make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality.

- Emphasise that it was the right thing to tell someone.
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Make a written record, which should be signed and include the time, date and your position in school.
- Do not include your opinion without stating it is your opinion.
- Pass the information to the DSL or alternate without delay.
- Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL as dealing with a disclosure can be distressing.

When a record of a safeguarding concern is passed to the DSL, the DSL will record the time and date the record of concern was received. The DSL will assess the concern and, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child/young person, consider whether it suggests that the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached or may be a child in need. If the DSL is unsure whether the threshold has been met, they will contact the MASH Professional Consultation Line for advice (0345 606 1499). Where appropriate, the DSL will complete and submit the SCC multi agency referral form (MARF) ([available on the SSP website](#)).

Where the DSL believes that a child or young person may be at imminent and significant risk of harm, they should call Customer First immediately and then complete the SSP MARF within 24 hours to confirm the referral. In these circumstances, it is important that any consultation should not delay a referral to Customer First.

Where a safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for completion of a MARF, the DSL should record how this decision has been reached and should consider whether additional needs of the child have been identified that might be met by a coordinated offer of early help including the school or college's local early help offer.

School staff might be required to contribute to multi-agency plans to provide additional support to children. This might include attendance at child protection conferences or core group meetings. The school is committed to providing as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible, including submitting reports for child protection conferences in advance of the meeting in accordance with SSP procedures and timescales.

Where reasonably possible, the school is committed to obtaining more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

School staff must ensure that they are aware of the procedure to follow when a child goes missing from education.

12. Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

Information sharing is vital in safeguarding children by identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, the school understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, and to keep the information they hold safe and secure, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. Staff will have regard to the Government guidance: [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) which supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL or a deputy.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the rationale for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

The school recognises that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or alternate DSL with other relevant members of staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents/carers or pupils), or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

As well as allowing for information sharing, in circumstances where it is warranted because it would put a child at risk of serious harm, the DPA 2018 and the GDPR allow schools to withhold information. This may be particularly relevant where a child is affected by domestic abuse perpetrated by a parent or carer, is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harm tests is met.

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care and if appropriate the police, (see [When to call the police guidance](#) (npcc.police.uk)) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.

Ordinarily, the school will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot reasonably be expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would put a child at risk. If in doubt, staff will consult with the MASH Professional Consultation Line on this point. Schools should have regard for their privacy policy.

The school will have regard to [SCC Guidance for schools on maintaining and transferring pupil safeguarding/child protection records](#). Where a child leaves the school, the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term). The file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

13. Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors

Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff, including supply staff, or volunteers and contractors that are working or may come into contact with children and young people whilst in our academies. Allegations can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults and are made for a variety of reasons. Staff should be aware and understand the school's child protection and whistle-blowing policies for managing allegations.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are a shared responsibility and dealt with appropriately, is critical. This should encourage an open and transparent culture and enable schools and colleges to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early and minimise the risk of abuse. A culture of vigilance will help to ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school or college are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution' (Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022).

We endeavour to create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust, whether they be members of staff, including supply staff, volunteers or contractors, this should be brought to the immediate attention of the DSL who will advise the Headteacher (if not the same person). In the case of the allegation being made against the Headteacher, this will be brought to the immediate attention of the Chair of Governors and the Chair of Directors of the Thedwastre Education Trust. The Headteacher/Chair of Governors must also discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the nature of the allegations in order for the appropriate action to be taken. In Suffolk, this role is undertaken by the Area Safeguarding Manager. This will constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion involving the LADO. Dependant on the allegation being made, Head teachers will need to:

- Refer to the LADO immediately and follow up in writing within 48 hours. In Suffolk schools should refer in the first instance to the Area Education Manager.
- Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child or young person to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser.

- Contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO.
- Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation.
- Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary.
- Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting or evaluation meeting.
- Advise the Teacher Regulation Agency, Independent Safeguarding Authority and DBS where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being founded.

A low-level concern which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

The school will follow the SSP [Arrangements for Managing Allegations of Abuse Against People Who Work With Children or Those Who Are in A Position of Trust](#) if a safeguarding concern or allegation is raised against an adult in a position of trust which meets the harm threshold.

An allegation that may meet the harm threshold is any information which indicates that a member of staff /volunteer may have:

- 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; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This applies to any child the member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in our school.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be dealt with in accordance with the school's policy for managing low-level concerns.

If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the headteacher. Where the concerns or allegations are about the headteacher, these should be referred to the Chair of Governors/CEO of Trust.

The headteacher/Chair of Governors/ CEO of Trust should report the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.

The corporate director for Children and Young People's Services, has identified dedicated staff to undertake the role of LADO. LADOs can be contacted via email on LADO@suffolk.gov.uk or by using the LADO central telephone number: **0300 123 2044** for allegations against all staff and volunteers.

Appropriate Behaviours and Low-Level Concerns about members of Staff

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. (Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, February 2022).

All staff, including supply staff and volunteers should be aware and understand the school's code of conduct, behaviour, acceptable use of ICT, use of smartphones and social networks policies and act in accordance with these. As well as this, all staff should familiarise themselves with, 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education setting' February 2022 which acts as a guide as to what acceptable behaviour looks like.

Staff should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others, include online. Staff should ensure they establish safe and responsible online behaviours.

There is a duty to report any low-level concern (a concern which is not serious enough to consider contacting LADO and do not meet thresholds of harm, which causes a nagging doubt or sense of unease, which may be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including outside work), regarding the behaviour of a member of staff with the right person, recorded, acted upon and dealt with.

Behaviours such being over-friendly with children, having favourites, holding 1:1 session in a secluded place or behind closed doors, taking photographs of children on their mobile phones or using inappropriate, intimidating or offensive language.

If a member of staff becomes aware of or receives a report that a pupil has become or maybe becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, this should be reported immediately to the headteacher. Parents should be contacted and a plan put in place to manage the situation.

One-to-one situations

Staff working in one to one situations; including visiting staff from an external organisation can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. It is advised to only work one to one with a child when absolutely necessary and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers.

Staff should be aware of any risk assessments and relevant policies and procedures. They should ensure that wherever possible a shared room is used or there is visual access or an open door.

Whenever possible and practicable, it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one additional adult other than the driver to act as an escort. Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless it is for a work purposes and pre-agreed by the head teacher and written consent is obtained from the parent or carer. The member of staff must have business level insurance and provide a copy of this a long with an MOT (if appropriate) and driving licence. The EVC is responsible for checking and keeping copies of these documents. If a member of staff is transporting a pupil in their private car alone, this must only ever be done as a last resort and for year 5 and 6 children only, who could obtain help if needed and for a child who does not have additional behaviour needs. Seatbelts must be worn and current legislation regarding the use of booster seats must be adhered to. Staff should ensure their behaviour is safe, the car is road worthy and not exceed the maximum carrying capacity. Staff should never offer a pupil a lift outside of their normal working duties unless in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk.

Communication with pupils and parents

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils. Staff should make their headteacher aware of these. If a pupil or parent seeks to establish contact or this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise caution and their professional judgement and inform the headteacher as soon as possible.

Communication with pupils and parents should only be done through agreed school platforms during working hours. If they need to use their private phone, they must use the caller withheld facility. Staff should read and become familiar with our acceptable user for remote education and online communication. Staff should not give out any personal contact details to pupils or parents, including web-based identities. If they locate these via other means and attempt to contact them, the member of staff should not respond and report it to the headteacher.

Any virtual lessons and learning should follow our acceptable user for online learning policy. Staff should pay careful attention to the background, the room it takes place in, dress and use of age appropriate links. The headteacher should be aware when live lessons are taking place and agreed to them being recorded. Parents, carers or pupils must be informed if a live lesson is being recorded and must not record live lessons themselves. Staff should avoid one-to-one situations and ask a colleague to join them if necessary.

Behaviour management

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments is unacceptable. Staff should take extreme care when using isolation or seclusion to ensure they are not breaching the pupil's human rights.

Physical contact and use of physical control

Adults should recognise that any physical contact with a child is open for scrutiny, be prepared to explain actions and if they believe an action they have taken could be misinterpreted, immediately report it. However, there are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with children but it is crucial that they are only done so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's needs.

Staff should acknowledge that some children are more comfortable with touch from adults than others and should seek pupil's permission and be sensitive to any signs that they may feel uncomfortable. Extra precaution should be taken when a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Adults should establish the child's views and consider alternatives if they feel the child will be uncomfortable.

Adults should use their professional judgement at all times and any physical contact should be in response to the needs of the child at that time, be of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form the contact will take. Physical contact should be appropriate, never be secretive or represent a misuse of authority or be for the gratitude of an adult.

It is good practice to tell a colleague if they have offered comfort to a distressed pupil.

SEND pupils may require more physical contact and if this is the case, a care plan and/or intimate care plan will be written with the involvement and agreement of the child and parents/carers. Our intimate care plan policy will be followed.

Other times where physical contact may be required is in PE, first aid, drama and music, e.g. to demonstrate a technique, adjust posture or support a child to prevent injury.

Physical force must not be used as a form of punishment. Corporal punishment and smacking are unlawful. The law and guidance for schools states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from: committing a criminal offense, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property or engaging in behaviour which would prevent good order and discipline. Great care must be exercised by adults to insure they do not physically intervene in a manner which could be considered unlawful, and be mindful of the impact on the child of the physical intervention, especially a child with SEND. Adults should always seek to defuse situations and avoid using physical intervention whenever possible. Disproportionate physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offense. If physical intervention is necessary, adults should only use the minimum force and for the shortest time needed. Any case where physical intervention has taken place, the incident must be recorded using CPOMS and the child's parents informed.

Where physical intervention can be anticipated, a behaviour plan and risk assessment should be written with and agreed to by the child and parents. This does not allow for any unlawful physical intervention. The school's behaviour policy should be followed.

Safe-changing

We understand that changing areas could be places where children are more vulnerable to child-on child abuse such as bullying and understand we need to keep them safe in these situations as well as allowing them their privacy, particularly as they get older.

We are also aware that some signs of abuse become apparent while children are getting changed. For example we may notice changes in behaviour, children being uncomfortable getting changed or unusual marks and bruises. Staff and volunteers are trained to recognize signs of abuse and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns.

We decide on appropriate supervision based on the age and developmental needs of the children. If it is not necessary for adults to remain in the room whilst children are changing, they should set clear behaviour expectations whilst they are unsupervised and adults should be in close proximity and in earshot, e.g. by leaving the door slightly ajar. Children should be aware of this in order to maintain good behaviour and deter any disturbance or bullying. They should understand that an adult will enter the room if necessary. The adult (if possible the same gender) should alert the children in advance that they are entering the room to give them a chance to cover up. Adults should only enter the room if necessary and not repeatedly enter the room without good reason. Children know who to talk to if they are concerned about a member of staff or another child. Any concerns will be taken seriously and safeguard procedures followed.

For those children who need extra support getting changed, we follow our intimate care policy. If it is necessary to give a child assistance, adults always do this openly and in the sight of others.

When using offsite changing facilities (swimming pools), members of the public do not share changing facilities with the children at our school. An adult remains in the changing rooms at all times if children are changing in cubicles. If not, adults will only remain in the changing room if needed but remain in close proximity, within earshot and with the door slightly ajar. Parent helpers who are not DBS checked would not be allowed in the changing facility. Any parent helpers who are DBS checked would follow the safe-changing procedures set out in this policy. They would not be involved in any intimate changing and seek advice and support from the member of staff in charge.

Photography, videos and other images

Consent is given by parents at the beginning of the school year to take and use photos and videos for display and for use on our school social media accounts and YouTube account

and school website. Staff are made aware of any child who does not have permission. Staff should only take photos for school use, ensure they are appropriate for display and they have parental permission before using them.

Photos and videos should only be taken using agreed school equipment and should be deleted once used. Photos should only be stored if there is a purpose for doing so, they should not be stored unnecessarily and a member of staff should be able to justify the reasons for having images of pupils in their possession.

Photos must not be taken of a child's injuries, even if requested by social care or recordings made of disclosures made by pupils.

When using images publicly, the use of the child's name should be avoided (as a maximum use the child's first name only).

Sexual conduct

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable and will be a matter of criminal and disciplinary procedures. Any concerns regarding communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative should be reported immediately. Staff should also be aware of behaviours which may constitute 'grooming'.

14. Use of school premises for non-school activities

The Trust will ensure that where school facilities/premises are hired or rented out to organisations or individuals, sports associations or service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

The Trust will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed.

Arrangements will also be put in place for the body hiring or renting the school facilities or premises to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

These arrangements will apply regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

Where a lease or hire agreement is entered into The Trust will ensure safeguarding requirements are included as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; this will make clear that any failure to comply would lead to termination of the agreement. The guidance on [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#) details the safeguarding arrangements that schools and colleges should expect these providers to have in place.

15. Whistleblowing

The Trust recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example, pupils in the school or members of the public.

The Trust would wish for everyone in the school community to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns through existing procedures within school, including the whistleblowing procedure adopted by governors/proprietor where necessary [*a model Whistleblowing policy is available from Schools' Choice where schools buy into that service*]. However, for members of staff who do not feel able to raise such concerns internally, there is a NSPCC whistleblowing helpline. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (line available from 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

16. Useful Contacts:

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Professional Helpline: 0345 606 1499

MASH [webchat facility](#)

Safeguarding Hub (MASH)



The Suffolk MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) has been developed from lessons highlighted by reviews of serious safeguarding incidents across the country. A recurrent theme of these reviews is the importance of having effective information sharing and close working arrangements between relevant agencies, with the need to ensure referrals and referrers get the right response first time.

Building on the long-established close partnership between local agencies, the MASH receives and processes all safeguarding referrals in respect of children without an allocated social worker and all vulnerable adults at risk of harm and abuse. Customer First is, and will continue to be, the first point of contact for all referrers to report safeguarding concerns for both children and adults. All non-safeguarding referrals for adults will be directed to the cluster teams.

MASH staff work together in an integrated model to identify the most appropriate response to an individual's identified needs. The emphasis is on effective sharing of information to ensure early identification of harm, and to trigger the correct interventions, and route referrals to the right services.

The MASH is staffed by a range of professionals from Health, Police, Education, Social Care, Probation, Youth Offending, Mental Health services and Housing, with the majority of staff being based in Landmark House, Ipswich. The MASH also has a strong partnership working with wider partners including schools, the Ambulance Service and voluntary and community organisations.

The MASH has a leadership team of managers from all of the partner agencies. The MASH Strategic Board is responsible for providing robust governance of the MASH and ensures statutory and local policy objectives are met.

Please feel free to view the MASH film

Please also see the MASH Service Structure

If you think someone is at risk

If you are worried that a child, young person or adult is at risk of abuse, exploitation, harm or neglect, please call Customer First on 0808 800 4005.

MASH Professional Consultation Line

However experienced professionals are, there may be times where they are not sure what action they should take, or they just need support and guidance to ensure they make the most informed decision.

The MASH Consultation Line is for a professional, such as a teacher, care worker or GP, to discuss the most appropriate and effective way of providing or obtaining help and support and recognising if there is a requirement for a referral to be submitted for a child or adult they feel is at risk of abuse. Where the child or vulnerable adult may need help and protection they will be given advice and guidance about making a referral, including how to involve family members where appropriate. Where a child and family have an allocated Social Worker, the professional will need to contact the named Social Worker or Lead professional to discuss any concerns.

Customer First (Professional Referral Line) for use in emergencies only: 0345 606 6167

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police (emergency only): 999

Suffolk Police main switchboard: 01473 613500

Suffolk Police Cybercrime Unit: 101

Suffolk Local Safeguarding Partnership www.suffolksp.org.uk

Suffolk County Council: www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/staying-safe-online/e-safer-suffolk/

LADO 0300 123 2044 or lado@suffolk.gov.uk or on the [LADO pages](#) on Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership website

17. Appendix A

Appendix A

Actions where there are concerns about a child

