

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2025 - 2026



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Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Thursfield	01782 233280 Ext 16
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Jayne Ellis	01782 233280 Option 4 Ext 36 internal
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Charlotte Beltran	01782 233280 Ext 14
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Amanda Ball	As above Ext 15
Early Help Champion	Jayne Ellis and Amanda Ball	As above Ext 36/15
Lead Person for Online Safety	Sophia Eaton	As above Ext 21
Lead Person for Looked After Children (LAC)	Amanda Ball	As above Ext 15
Lead Person for CSE	Jayne Ellis	As above Ext 36
Lead Person for PREVENT	Jayne Ellis	As above Ext 36
Lead for Young Carers	Amanda Ball Jayne Ellis	As above Ext 15 As above Ext 36
Senior Manager responsible for allegations made against staff	Sarah Thursfield	As above Ext 16
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	John Hanlon	01782 233342 John.Hanlon@stoke.gov.uk
Early Help Support South West Locality	Effective Practice Co-ordinator Becky Aldridge	07385 366547 Rebecca.aldridge@stoke.gov.uk
Early intervention Level 2	Lynne Clarke - CEO Family Focus	01782 863762 07726715239 lynn.clarke@familyfocusstaffs.org.uk
Operation Encompass	Sarah Thursfield Jayne Ellis	Teacher's helpline 8am-11am 02045139990 commencing 4.5.21
Advanced Family Support Worker (South West area)	Maxine Cockerham	01782 231815
Family Support Advisor (South West area)	Becky Booth	01782 231815

Senior Social Worker for Child Sexual Exploitation	Angela Davenhill	101 Ext.3616 07769 238950
Stoke-on-Trent Children's Social Care – for referrals	IFD – Integrated Front Door (Formally ChAD)	01782 235100 8am-6pm https://childrensportalcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home referrals via the portal on the Stoke on Trent Children and Families website
	Emergency Duty Team – after hours, weekends and public holidays	01782 234234
Staffordshire Children Social Care – for referrals Staffordshire Early Help Team	SFIFD- Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door	03001118007 option 1 Emergency Duty Service: (Out of Hours) Telephone: 0345 604 2886 Mobile: 07815 492613 01782 296290
Police Local PCSO	Non-emergency – 101 Andrew Bagnall	Emergency – 999 Andrew.bagnall@staffordshire.police.uk
Health Visiting and the School Nursing Services	Stoke on Trent 0-19 service	0808 178 3374
Community Cohesion Officer	Iftikhar Ahmed	01782 235778 07826 891844 Iftikhar.ahmed@stoke.gov.uk
Prevent Community Cohesion Manager	Shahzad Tahir	01782 238771 shahzad.tahir@stoke.gov.uk
Education Lead – MASH	Amanda Clough	01782 236516 amanda.clough@stoke.gov.uk

Terminology and Acronyms

Child or young person	Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday
Parent	Birth parents or adoptive parents i.e. those with parental responsibility. It is recognised, however, that other adults may be in a parenting role, for example step parents and foster carers.
Staff	All those working for or on behalf of the school, including paid and unpaid staff, full time or part time staff, temporary, casual, agency staff, self-employed people and contractors
Abuse	A form of maltreatment which includes physical, sexual and emotional harm or neglect. A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely by a stranger.
Early Help	Providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years to teenage years.
Initial Early Help Assessment	A means of providing families with the help and support they need to prevent issues from escalating (and avoid involvement from Children's Social Care.)
Early Help Assessment (EHA)	A way of identifying the strengths and needs within a family in order to provide the right help and support at the right time.
Safeguarding	The action we take to promote the welfare of all children and prevent them from coming to any harm.
Child protection	The activity undertaken to protect specific children who are identified as suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. Child protection is one element of safeguarding.
Harm	The ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.
Significant harm	The threshold that requires compulsory intervention in the family for the best interests of the child.
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSO	Designated Safeguarding Officer
Deputy DSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
(L)SCB	(Local) Safeguarding Children Board
CIN / CIN Plan	Child in Need / Child in Need Plan (under s.17 Children Act 1989)
CP / CP Plan	Child Protection / Child Protection Plan (under s.47 Children Act 1989)
LAC	Looked After Child
PLAC	Previously looked-after children
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CET	Child Exploitation Team (within Staffordshire Police)
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
CME	Children Missing from Education
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
CSC	Children's Social Care
ChAD	Children's Advice and Duty Service (formally SRT) Stoke on Trent
WRAP	Workshop to raise awareness of 'Prevent' which is part of the Governments counter terrorism strategy.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every pupil, both inside and outside of the school premises as the school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. This will be achieved by:
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to, or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
 - Ensuring the governing body has arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and will work together with other agencies to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm.
- 1.2. Our school is a community and all those directly connected with it - staff members, volunteers, governors, parents, families and pupils; have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure.
- 1.3. This policy applies to all children (i.e. those who have not yet reached their 18th birthday;) who are pupils at this school or who visit /come into contact with our school community.
- 1.4. This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.
- 1.5. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

2. PURPOSE and AIM OF THIS POLICY

- 2.1. To promote and prioritise the safety and welfare needs of pupils.
- 2.2. To protect pupils from maltreatment and prevent the impairment of their health and development.
- 2.3. To ensure that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, enabling them to have the best outcomes in life.
- 2.4. To support pupils' development in ways that will foster security, confidence, resilience and independence.
- 2.5. To provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure, valued, respected, listened to, and confident to approach trusted adults if they are in difficulties.
- 2.6. To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers of their responsibilities to safeguard children.

- 2.7. To ensure that all members of the school community respond to cases of suspected abuse or neglect consistently, sensitively, professionally and in ways which best support the needs of the child.

3. OUR ETHOS

- 3.1. Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern and we will always act in the best interests of the child.
- 3.2. We accept that where safeguarding and child protection are concerned – *'it could happen here.'*
- 3.3. We recognise the importance of providing a school environment where pupils feel safe and respected.
- 3.4. We encourage pupils to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to.
- 3.5. We recognise that all adults within the school have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and as such they will always exercise 'professional curiosity.'
- 3.6. We will work closely with parents and carers to ensure their understanding of the school's responsibilities to safeguarding and promote the welfare of their children, which may include the need to make referrals to other agencies in some situations.
- 3.7. We will work closely with other agencies to meet the needs of our pupils.

4. Definitions

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

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

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

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

For the purposes of this policy, "**sexual violence**" refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

For the purposes of this policy, “**sexual harassment**” refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content.
 - Upskirting.
 - Sexualised online bullying.
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

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

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

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

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578979/GD8_-_Sexting_Guidance.pdf

5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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

Legislation

- 5.1. **Section 175 of the Education Act 2002** places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions (including sixth-form colleges) to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.
- 5.2. **Children Act 1989**
- 5.3. **Children Act 2004**
- 5.4. **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- 5.5. **The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)**
- 5.6. **Sexual Offences Act 2003**
- 5.7. **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)**
- 5.8. **Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009**
- 5.9. **Equality Act 2010**
- 5.10. **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
- 5.11. **The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**
- 5.12. **Data Protection Act 2018**
- 5.13. **Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019**

Statutory Guidance

- 5.14. **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018:** A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (Dec 2023)
- 5.15. **Keeping Children Safe in Education:** Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (Sept 2025)
- 5.16. **DFE (2015) The Prevent Duty**
- 5.17. **DFE (2018) Disqualification under the Children Act 2006**
- 5.18. **HM Government (2020) Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation.**

- 5.19. HM Government (2021) Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.
- 5.20. Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling Cases of forced marriage.

Non-statutory guidance
- 5.21. **Information Sharing** – Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)
- 5.22. **DFE What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused** (2015)
- 5.23. **DfE (2021) Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.**
- 5.24. **DFE (2017) Child Sexual Exploitation**
- 5.25. **DFE (2020) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people**
- 5.26. **DFE (2021) Teachers' Standards**
- 5.27. **DFE (2022) Recruit teachers from overseas**
- 5.28. **Department of Health and Social Care (2022) Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance.**
- 5.29. **Stoke-on-Trent (Staffordshire) Safeguarding Children Board Procedures**

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/portal/>

6. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1. **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – This is the lead person with overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in our school. The **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** works closely with the DSL and completes the operational safeguarding activities on a day to day basis. The DSL's responsibilities are described in **Appendix 1**.
- 6.2. The DSL is our school's headteacher and her role as DSL is explicit in her job description. This person has the appropriate authority and is given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so; and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- 6.3. The DSL acts as the main point of contact with other safeguarding partners and the child death review partner.

- 6.4. The DSL understands when they should consider calling the police, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf#:~:text=Contacting%20the%20police%20%2D%20There%20is%20a,the%20most%20accurate%20account%20of%20the%20incident.>

- 6.5. The DSL will ensure the best educational outcomes by identifying at-risk pupils to the school and its staff, so that the relevant personnel understand each pupil's educational and welfare needs.
- 6.6. The DSL will support teaching staff to identify the challenges that at-risk pupils may face and the additional academic support and adjustments they can make to support these pupils.
- 6.7. **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads** - We have two Deputy **DSLs** to ensure there is appropriate cover for this above role at all times.
- 6.8. **Early Help Champion** - Our Early Help Champion is responsible for leading on, and supporting other staff to lead on, early help assessments and early help plans for children and their families requiring help and support that does not meet the threshold for involvement with Children's Social Care.
- 6.9. **Safeguarding Governor** – We have a nominated governor responsible for safeguarding who will champion good practice, liaise with the head teacher to provide support and challenge, ensure that safeguarding arrangements are audited and quality assured, and to provide information regarding safeguarding to the governing body.
- 6.10. **Senior Manager for Dealing with Allegations** – The head teacher is the person responsible for dealing with allegations of abuse made against school staff. The Manager for dealing with allegations against the head teacher is the chair of governors. The procedure for managing allegations is detailed in **Appendix 13**.
- 6.11. **Head Teacher** - will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 6.12. **The Governing Body** is collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day practice.
- 6.13. **All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers** understand their responsibility to safeguard and protect children; know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, how to respond to pupils who disclose, and what to do if they are concerned about a child.
- 6.14. **All staff members** have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share (and withhold) personal information.

7. SUPPORTING CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE

We recognise that a child being absent from education, particularly on a persistent or repeated basis, can act as a vital warning sign of a wide range of safeguarding issues. Our procedures for following up

absence will be managed with this understanding, and persistent absence will always be a trigger for discussion with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

- 7.1. We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and have some sense of blame. Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives. Domestic abuse has been added to the list of safeguarding issues that all staff should be aware of. The guidance makes it clear that domestic abuse: can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional can impact on children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of.
- 7.2. In these circumstances, a pupils' behaviour may range from that which is perceived to be 'normal' to behaviour which may be aggressive or withdrawn.
- 7.3. Our school will support all pupils by:-**
- 7.4. ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning;
- 7.5. ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to e-safety, enabling pupils and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and how to use these responsibly; identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems, review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually, and block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning. The changes to part 1 are: Emphasis on filtering and monitoring: As part of their safeguarding and online safety training, staff need to understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring systems (paragraph 14). This new emphasis is repeated several times throughout the guidance.
- 7.6. ensuring that child protection is included in the curriculum to help pupils stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe, identify who they can talk to and where they can get help from; We hold regular assemblies across the key stages to make the children aware of Cloud 9 and the staff who are there to support them and the worry box they can use confidentially if they have a concern
- 7.7. ensuring the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems;
- 7.8. ensuring access to a number of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties;
- 7.9. building confidence, resilience and independence;
- 7.10. encouraging development of self-esteem and assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying;
- 7.11. ensuring repeated hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic, gender or disability-based bullying, are considered under child protection procedures;
- 7.12. liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children; and explanation around how being absent or missing from education can indicate various safeguarding concerns and forms of abuse;
- 7.13. monitoring children who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns and providing appropriate support.

8. CHILD PROTECTION and SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

- 8.1. We have developed a structured procedure in line with Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board Procedures which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse. This is detailed in **Appendix 8**.
- 8.2. The name of the DSL is clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse or neglect.
- 8.3. We will ensure all parents and carers are aware of the responsibilities of staff members to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by publishing the policy and procedures on our website and by referring to them in our introductory school materials.
- 8.4. In line with the procedures, the Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) will be notified as soon as there is a significant concern (or the relevant Children's Social Care Team if there is already a social worker involved).

9. RECORD KEEPING

- 9.1. All child protection and welfare concerns will be recorded and kept in line with the Stoke-on-Trent (Staffordshire) Safeguarding Children Board guidance.
- 9.2. We will continue to support any pupil leaving the school about whom there have been concerns, by ensuring that all appropriate information, including child protection and welfare concerns, are forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's destination school as a matter of priority.

10. SAFER WORKFORCE and MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

We maintain a culture of openness, transparency, and professional curiosity. Our Low-Level Concerns Policy ensures that all concerns about the behaviour of adults working in the school, including supply staff, contractors, and volunteers (whether that behaviour is concerning, inappropriate, or not consistent with our code of conduct) are recorded and dealt with appropriately. This process is separate from allegations that meet the harm threshold.

- 10.1. We prevent people who pose risks to children from working in our school by ensuring that we undertake safeguarding checks in line with the statutory guidance - *Keeping Children Safe in Education: September 2025*.
- 10.2. We ensure that agencies and third parties supplying staff provide evidence that they have made the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in our school.
- 10.3. Every job description and person specification has a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder.
- 10.4. We ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.
- 10.5. We have a procedure in place to address allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Sept 2025* and *Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board Procedure: Managing Allegations against Adults Working with Children and Young People*. This procedure is detailed in **Appendix 14**.

11. STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING and DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1. All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers, teaching assistants and supply staff, will be given induction that includes basic child protection training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the safeguarding and child protection policy, staff code of conduct, Peer-on-Peer Abuse Policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2023. Staff who do not work directly with children would be encouraged to read Part one, but if not they must at least read Annex A which condenses Part one.
- 11.2. The induction will be proportionate to staff members' roles and responsibilities.
- 11.3. The DSL/DSO will undergo updated relevant safeguarding training every two years (**not** L1 or L2 safeguarding training every 2 years, but a relevant course to expand the knowledge and understanding of various safeguarding issues locally and nationally. This is in line with LSCB guidance.)
- 11.4. All staff members of the school (including volunteers and governors) will undergo level 1 face to face safeguarding and child protection training (whole-school training) every three years. This will include, at a minimum:
- The issues surrounding sexual violence and sexual harassment;
 - Contextual safeguarding;
 - How to keep LAC and PLAC safe
 - CCE and the need to refer cases to the National Referral Mechanism;
 - **An understanding of the updated KCSIE 2025 guidance, including the heightened risks associated with poor attendance.**
 - **Training on the school's Low-Level Concerns Policy and how to report any concern, no matter how small.**
 - **The importance of understanding and promoting excellent attendance as a safeguarding factor.**
 - Updated online safety training.
- 11.5. In addition to level 1 safeguarding training every 3 years, all staff will also receive annual safeguarding and child protection updates (for example via e-mail, e-bulletins, staff meetings; briefing sessions or training;) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard pupils effectively. This may be provided by the DSL or other member of the senior leadership team.
- 11.6. Staff members who miss the whole-school training will be required to join another school's whole-school training or attend an 'open session.'
- 11.7. The nominated governor for safeguarding will undergo face to face 'Introduction to Safeguarding for Governors' training, (as provided by the governor support unit and which includes level 1 training ;) prior to or soon after appointment to the role. Level 1 safeguarding training should be updated every 3 years.
- 11.8. We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate child protection training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole-school training if it takes place during their period of work for the school.
- 11.9. The school will maintain accurate records of staff induction, training and annual updates.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

- 12.1. We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- 12.2. The head teacher or DSL will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.
- 12.3. Staff members cannot promise a pupil to keep 'secrets' which might compromise their safety or well-being, or the safety and well-being of others.
- 12.4. All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, and the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to this.
- 12.5. All our staff members who come into contact with pupils will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- 12.6. We will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do under the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent. This is covered in greater detail in **Appendix 11**.

13. INTER-AGENCY WORKING

- 13.1. We will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services, as well as the police and Children's Social Care.
- 13.2. We will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings, including early help meetings, child protection conferences and core groups.
- 13.3. We will participate in serious case reviews, other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits, embedding recommendations into practice and completing required actions within agreed timescales.

14. CONTRACTORS, SERVICE / ACTIVITY PROVIDERS and WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

- 14.1. We will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures. We require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.
- 14.2. We will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working alongside our pupils have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Sept 2025*. If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our school premises will be refused.
- 14.3. When we commission services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement, along with the requirement for them to have undertaken safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

15. WHISTLE-BLOWING and COMPLAINTS

- 15.1. We cannot expect pupils to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so.

- 15.2. Therefore we will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of safeguarding and child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If necessary, they will speak with the head teacher, the chair of the governing body or with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 15.3. We have a Whistle Blowing Policy which is available to all staff.
- 15.4. We have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice.
- 15.5. We will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our child protection arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

16. SITE SECURITY

- 16.1. All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting any issues or concerns that may come to light.
- 16.2. We check the identity of all visitors coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out of the school and to display a **visitor's badge** while on the school site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable will be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
- 16.3. The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual, (parent, professional or anyone else;) that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse that person access to the school site.

17. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The governing body will provide robust challenge to school leaders on all aspects of safeguarding, including the effectiveness of the safeguarding culture, the handling of low-level concerns, attendance data, and the impact of actions taken to keep children safe. This will include regularly reviewing the single central record (SCR) and ensuring any deficiencies are remedied without delay.

- 17.1. We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures. This will include periodic audits of child protection files and records by the DSL.
- 17.2. We will complete a safeguarding audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board and using the audit tool provided by them for this purpose.
- 17.3. The school's senior leadership team and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy without delay any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements.

18. POLICY REVIEW

- 18.1. This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle.
- 18.2. The DSL will ensure that staff members are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures.

19. ASSOCIATED POLICIES and PROCEDURES

19.1. The following policies and procedures are relevant to the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedure.

- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Before and After School Policy
- (Relational) Behaviour Policy
- Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy
- Children in Care
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Drug and Alcohol Education Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Filtering and Monitoring Policy
- First Aid
- Governor Confidentiality
- Guidance for New Staff, Governors and Volunteers
- Health and Safety Policy
- Information Security
- Looked After Child Policy
- Lettings
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Missing Child Policy and Procedures
- Offsite Visits (Evolve)
- One to One Working Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Parental Responsibility
- Photographs Consent Form
- PSHE Policy
- Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy
- Prevention of Radicalization
- Pupils' Mobile Phone and Device Policy
- Radicalization and Extremism Policy
- Record Management Policy
- Retention of Information Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Acceptable Use Agreement
- Staff Code of Conduct – Staff Handbook
- Transporting Children and Young People Policy
- Uncollected Children Policy
- Visiting Professionals Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting) Policy
- Work Experience Policy

APPENDIX 1 - The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer

1 MANAGING REFERRALS – the Designated Safeguarding Lead:-

- 1.1. Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety.
- 1.2. Has a good understanding of Stoke-on-Trent's Threshold Framework to ensure that children and families get the right support and intervention at the right time.
- 1.3. Refers all cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation to the Stoke-on-Trent's Children's Advice and Duty service and to the Police if a crime may have been committed.
- 1.4. Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- 1.5. Liaises with the head teacher (if DSL is not the head teacher) about safeguarding issues relating to individual children, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- 1.6. Contribute to the assessment of children, and acts as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of child protection and safeguarding, and support them with the assessment of children.
- 1.7. Liaises with agencies providing early intervention services and coordinates referrals from the school to early help services for children and families in need of support.
- 1.8. Refer cases to the Channel Panel where there is a concern regarding radicalisation/extremism.
- 1.9. Liaise with the case manager and the LA designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- 1.10. Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- 1.11. Work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
 - Ensuring that the school knows which pupils have or had a social worker.
 - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these pupils.
 - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these pupils.

- Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these pupils reach their potential.
- Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these pupils are experiencing with teachers and the SLT.

2 RECORD KEEPING – the Designated Safeguarding Lead:-

- 2.1 Keeps written records of child protection and welfare concerns in line the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board guidance.
- 2.2 Creates a stand-alone file for pupils with safeguarding concerns via MyConcern.
- 2.3 Maintains a chronology of significant incidents for each pupil with safeguarding concerns. Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.
- 2.4 Ensure such records are kept confidentially and securely, and separate from the pupil's educational record.
- 2.5 Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- 2.6 Ensure arrangements to hand over the child protection file of a pupil transferring to another school, are made without delay, and certainly within 5 days. The DSL/DSO will verbally advise the DSL of the destination school of the concerns and make arrangements to securely and confidentially hand over the file.
- 2.7 Where the destination school is too far for the DSL/DSO to do a personal handover, the file will be sent separate from the pupil's education file and by secure courier. The DSL/DSO will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred, and will require a receipt from the destination school.
- 2.8 Where a parent elects to remove their child from the school roll to home educate, the educational establishment will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the local authority.

3 MULTI-AGENCY WORKING and INFORMATION SHARING – the Designate Safeguarding Lead:-

- 3.1 The school will be fully engaged, involved, and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Once the school is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. The school will act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements.
- 3.2 Cooperates with Children's Social Care for enquiries under section 17 and section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

- 3.3 Attends, or ensures other relevant staff members' attendance at early help meetings, child protection conferences, core group meetings, child in need meetings and other multi agency meetings as required.
- 3.4 Liaises with other agencies working with the child, shares information as appropriate and contributes to assessments.
- 3.5 Ensures each member of staff has access to and understands the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, including providing induction on these matters to new staff members.
- 3.6 Makes the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures available publicly.
- 3.7 Raises awareness of parents and carers of the existence of the safeguarding and child protection policy, in particular that information may be shared with other agencies, cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation will be referred to Children's Social Care, and the role of the school in any investigations that ensue.

4 TRAINING – the Designated Safeguarding Lead:-

- 4.1 Undertakes appropriate safeguarding training **every two years**, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and guidance from the LSCB, order to:-
- be able to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to them, including special circumstances such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, challenging extremism etc.;
 - understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, e.g. Stoke-on-Trent's Guide to Levels of Need, Early Help and Safeguarding Thresholds;
 - have a working knowledge of how the local authority conducts initial and review child protection conferences and contribute effectively to these;
 - be alert to the specific needs of children in need (as specified in section 17 of the Children Act 1989), those with special educational needs, pregnant teenagers and young carers.
- 4.2 Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the educational establishment's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, including providing induction on these matters to new staff members.
- 4.3 Organises whole-school SCB level 1 safeguarding training for all staff members at least **every three years**.
- 4.4 Ensures staff members who miss the training receive it by other means, e.g. by joining an open session or another school's training.
- 4.5 Provides an annual briefing / update / training session to the whole school on any changes to child protection legislation and procedures (internally, locally or nationally;) relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews; or awareness raising regarding any safeguarding issues or themes emerging locally or nationally.
- 4.6 Links with the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board to identify appropriate training opportunities for relevant staff members.

4.7 Ensures the school allocates time and resources every year for relevant staff members to attend training.

4.8 Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any action the school takes to protect them.

4.9 Maintains accurate records of staff induction, staff training and staff briefings.

4.10 **Designated Safeguarding Lead is required to undertake the following training :-**

Level of training	Course title	Frequency	Notes
Level 1	Safeguarding Children Face to face session delivered by SCB approved trainer	Every 3 years as part of whole school update	This must be completed irrespective of any other training undertaken. If you commission a level 1 course that is NOT APPROVED by Stoke-on-Trent SCB, it may not be sufficiently in depth for Ofsted. SCB Level 1 workbook accompanying the course should be retained for Ofsted.
Level 2	Level 2 Working Together to Safeguard Children – multi agency (full 2 days)	No requirement to renew providing some safeguarding training is undertaken every 2 years.	This course can only be delivered face to face in a multi-agency setting to be compliant. DSLs who wish to refresh this course need undertake day 1 only. (NB level 2 training to be compliant, it cannot be done online or as a whole school.)
Level 3	Subject specific courses relevant to needs of school community. Suggested :- • Child sexual exploitation • Female genital mutilation • Prevent/challenging extremism • E-safety • Forced marriage	No requirement to renew level 3 courses providing some safeguarding training is undertaken every 2 years.	See SCB Training Prospectus for additional relevant courses
Level 4	• Designated Safeguarding Lead training • Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers training	No requirement to renew level 4 courses providing some safeguarding training is undertaken every 2 years.	
ANNUAL UPDATES	DSLs must update their knowledge and skills regularly and at least annually (via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs or taking time to read and update themselves) on safeguarding developments relevant to their role. - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025		

IMPORTANT

DSLs are **NOT** required to undertake level 1 or level 2 safeguarding training every 2 years. They are required to undertake the comprehensive SCB level 1 course every 3 years, and **SOME RELEVANT** safeguarding training every 2 years, in order to expand and diversify their safeguarding knowledge.

5 AWARENESS RAISING

- 5.1 Review the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures annually and liaise with the educational establishment's governing body to update and implement them.
- 5.2 Make the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures available publicly and raise awareness of parents that referrals about suspected abuse may be made and the role of the educational establishment in any investigations that ensue.
- 5.3 Provide updates to the educational establishment on any changes to child protection legislation and procedures and relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews, at least annually.

6 QUALITY ASSURANCE – the Designated Safeguarding Lead:-

- 6.1 Reviews the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures annually and liaises with the school's governing body to update and implement them.
- 6.2 Monitors the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of child protection and welfare concern files (at least once a year).
- 6.3 Completes an audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board.
- 6.4 Remedies any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements.
- 6.5 Provides regular reports to the governing body detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and the number of children with child protection plans and other relevant data.

Roles and Responsibilities of others

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.
- Be prepared to identify pupils who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the school's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL/DSO and deputy DSLs.

- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training, during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, as required, and at least annually.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to **IFD**, as well as for making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Make a referral to **IFD** and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL/DSO.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Be aware that a pupil may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSL/DSO if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put pupils at risk of harm.
- Be aware of behaviours linked to issues such as drug-taking, alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, and sharing indecent images, and other signs that pupils may be at risk of harm.

Teachers, including the headteacher, have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.

The governing board has a duty to:

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

- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description.
- Appoint a DSO and one or more deputy DSLs to provide support to the DSL, and ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL and that the role is explicit in their job description(s).
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place, children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensure that a member of the governing board is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the headteacher or another governor.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the governing board itself, the SLT and DSL/DSO.
- Make sure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training updates, e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly.
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to peer-on-peer abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback.
- Establish an early help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.

- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated teacher works with the virtual school head (VSH) to discuss how the pupil premium funding can best be used to support LAC.
- Introduce mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly with regard to the pupil's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that all members of the governing board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to process personal information fairly and lawfully, and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. (See ICO guidance).

The headteacher has a duty to:

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

APPENDIX 2 - Guide to Levels of Need

1. THE STOKE-ON-TRENT THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK August 2022

- 1.1. The Willows Primary School recognises the importance of identifying issues early, and providing early help children and families in order to prevent issues from escalating.
- 1.2. Most parents can look after their children without needing help from anyone other than their family or friends. However, some parents may need additional help from our school or from other services such as the NHS.
- 1.3. Providing help early is more effective in promoting the welfare of children, than reacting later.
- 1.4. As such, we are committed to working collaboratively with other agencies and with the Early Intervention Teams to provide a coordinated offer of early help, in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025* and local guidance.
- 1.5. We use Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership's **Threshold framework 2023 'Accessing the right help at the right time'** to support us in our discussions with colleagues from other agencies, and to make decisions about the right level of support/assessment required for the child and family. And when this should be 'stepped up' or 'stepped down'.

- 1.1. The Guide to Levels of Need has four levels and every child living in Stoke-on-Trent will fit into one of these four levels.

1.2. Level 1 – Universal Services - Children do not have additional needs

- Children are achieving expected outcomes.
- Their needs are met by their parents alongside universal services.
- No additional support is required as there are no concerns about health and development, parenting capacity or environmental factors.

1.3. Level 2 – Universal Plus - Children have some additional need

- Parents require professional support or guidance to help them to meet their children's needs.
- We are able to provide that additional support or make a referral to an agency that is able to provide that support.
- We will undertake an *initial early help assessment* to enable us to provide the right support.
- The paperwork and registration details for initial Early Help can be found at:-

<https://childrensportallcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

1.4. Level 3 – Targeted Early Help - Children with multiple and complex needs

- Needs cannot be met at previous levels and children and parents require coordinated, targeted, multi-agency intervention and support to meet the children's needs.
- The initial early help assessment will be the referral into the Early Intervention Team **via the portal**, if additional support is required.
- Needs are met through multi-agency support and the use of Early Help Plans.
- We will register with the Early Help Assessment/plan with the Early Help Co-ordinator

1.5. Level 4 – Statutory/Specialist - Children with acute needs, including children in need of protection

- Children and parents require multi-agency responses which include specialist intervention coordinated by Children's Social Care under section 17 or section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Risks and unmet needs have not been resolved through Early Help intervention, so we will seek advice through **IFD** as to whether the threshold for a safeguarding referral is met.
- If there is an immediate risk of harm then the Police will be contacted.
- If there is a risk of significant harm, then a referral will be made to Children's Social Care.

APPENDIX 3 - Categories of Abuse

1. Abuse, neglect and exploitation are forms of maltreatment. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, by failing to act to prevent harm or by failing to meet a child's basic needs. Children may be abused within the family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or by strangers; and increasingly, via the internet. 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.

2. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

2.1. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

2.2. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, although it may also occur alone.

2.3. Emotional abuse may involve:-

- seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. domestic abuse;
- making a child feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another;
- not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;
- inappropriate age or developmental expectations;
- overprotection and limitation of exploration, learning and social interaction;
- high criticism and low warmth;
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying;)
- exploitation or corruption

3. NEGLECT

3.1. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

3.2. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

3.3. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

3.4. Once a child is born, it may involve a parent or carer failing to:-

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment;)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision, (including the use of inadequate care givers;)
- provide access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

4. PHYSICAL ABUSE

- 4.1. Physical abuse is deliberately hurting a child, causing physical harm and injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.
- 4.2. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- 4.3. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

5. SEXUAL ABUSE

- 5.1. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- 5.2. Activities may involve physical contact, including penetration of any part of the body, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- 5.3. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images including on the internet, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- 5.4. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.
- 5.5. Child Sexual Exploitation is also sexual abuse. It involves children receiving something, for example accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It could take the form of grooming of children, e.g. to take part in sexual activities or to post sexual images of themselves on the internet – see **appendix 4** (specific safeguarding issues.)

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

Domestic abuse

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

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

- Are relatives.

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

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/professionals-folder/procedure-manuals/d---cyp-specific-circumstances.en>

APPENDIX 4 – Signs and Indicators of Abuse

- 1.1. The most important sign/indicator of abuse or neglect is a disclosure from a pupil, and this will always be taken seriously.
- 1.2. Signs and indicators can often appear in a cluster. Serious case reviews have found that parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and parental mental health problems (known collectively as the 'toxic trio') coexisting in a family can increase the risks to children.
- 1.3. Pupils may show symptoms from one, all, or none of the categories, but staff will be vigilant to anything unusual displayed by the pupil. Many of the indicators below may be caused by other factors not connected to any form of abuse. However, if concerned, staff will always exercise professional curiosity and will share concerns with the DSL.
- 1.4. We are aware that in an abusive relationship, the child may:-
- Appear frightened of their parent/carer
 - Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and stage of development (whilst taking into account the different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).
- 1.5. We are aware that in an abusive relationship, the parent or carer may:-
- persistently avoid child health services and treatment of the child's illnesses
 - have unrealistic expectations of the child
 - frequently complain about or to the child and fail to provide attention or praise
 - be absent
 - be misusing substances
 - persistently refuse to allow access on home visits by professionals
 - be involved in domestic violence and abuse
 - be socially isolated
- 1.6. Staff are constantly mindful that pupils with **special educational needs and disabilities** can face additional safeguarding challenges including:-
- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability
 - children with special educational needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may show no outward signs
 - communication issues can be a barrier to effective safeguarding

Extra pastoral support and attention should be considered for these children. Further information can be found at:

- [send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](#)
- [supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions](#)
- [Mencap](#)
- [safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send](#)
- [safeguarding-child-protection/deaf-and-disabled-children](#)

- [The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services \(SENDIASS\) Stoke](#)

1.7. The following table gives some examples of what staff may see or hear, but **this is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as a checklist.**

Signs of potential PHYSICAL ABUSE	• Bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps • Undue fear of adults - fear of going home to parents or carers • Aggression towards others • Unexplained injuries or burns – particularly if they are recurrent (and especially in non-mobile babies) • Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them • Injuries that occur on parts of the body which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games • Injuries to the side of the face, the ear, the neck • Black eyes, particularly bilateral • Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming • Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental/satisfactory explanation • Cuts/scratches in areas that would be difficult to do accidentally • Injuries to the soft tissue area • Hitting (with the hand or implement) smacking, punching, kicking, slapping, twisting/pulling ear, hair or fingers, holding/squeezing with a tight grip, biting, and burning • Fabricated or induced illness
Signs of potential NEGLECT	• Exposure to danger • Lack of supervision • Under nourishment and subsequent failure to grow and thrive • Constant hunger • Stealing or gorging food • Untreated illnesses • Inadequate care • Injuries that have not received medical attention • Non-attendance for health appointments • Inadequate/inappropriate clothing • Poor standards of hygiene • Unsafe home environment • Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise
Signs of potential EMOTIONAL ABUSE	• Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. • Depression / aggression, extreme anxiety • Nervousness, frozen watchfulness • Obsessions or phobias • Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration • Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults • Attention-seeking behaviour • Persistent tiredness • Running away / stealing / lying

	• Parent humiliating, taunting or threatening child • Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise. • Shouting / yelling at a child • Copying or role playing abuse seen in the home (i.e. domestic violence) • Radicalisation – use of inappropriate language, violent extremist literature, the expression of extremist views, advocating violent action
Signs of potential SEXUAL ABUSE	• Use of language that is inappropriate for age / stage of development • Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age / stage of development • Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters • Regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play • Wariness on being approached • Soreness or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas • Pain on urination • Difficulty in walking or sitting • Stained or bloody underclothes • Recurrent tummy pains or headaches • Bruises on inner thigh or buttock • Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse • Sexual activity through words, play or drawing • Child displaying 'sexually inappropriate' behaviour towards adults • Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home • Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations • Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia • Telling you about being asked to 'keep a secret' • Dropping hints or clues about abuse. • Unaccounted sources of money or gifts, or multiple mobile phones • Refer also to Sexual Exploitation at appendix 5

APPENDIX 5 – Specific Safeguarding Issues

- 1.1. School staff members need to be aware of specific safeguarding issues and be alert to any risks.
- 1.2. The Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board Procedures, Section D has detailed information, policy and procedure on many of the specific issues identified below. We will follow the local procedures for responding to risks.
- <http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/professionals-folder/procedure-manuals/d---cyp-specific-circumstances.en>
- 1.3. The government website, [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) also has broad government guidance on a variety of issues. The following is not a comprehensive list and staff members should search the GOV.UK website and the *Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board Procedures* for advice on other issues:-

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Children missing from home or care
- Children missing from education
- Child abduction and community safety incident
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Cyber-crime
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate crime
- 'Honour-based' violence
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Private fostering
- Homelessness
- Preventing radicalisation and the Prevent duty
- Sexting
- Self-harm and suicidal behaviour
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Virginity testing and hymenoplasty

1. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

- 1.4. The Willows Primary School recognises the need to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and protect those who may go missing from education. The school will follow the policy and guidance issued by Stoke-on-Trent City Council on Children Missing from Education (CME) which can be found at:-
www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/education/education.en
- 1.5. A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including abuse or neglect, or child sexual and criminal exploitation.
- 1.6. We have an admission and attendance register and all pupils are placed on both registers.
- 1.7. We will work collaboratively with the local authority (and other agencies where appropriate) to share information about attendance.
- 1.8. If a registered pupil fails to attend regularly, or is continuously absent for two weeks without explanation, or fails to return from a holiday, the school will notify the Local Authority to try and prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing from education in the future.
- 1.9. If a pupil suddenly ceases to attend without prior warning, and their whereabouts cannot be established, the school will immediately notify the Local Authority. If there are any reasons to be concerned for the child's safety, including any past history of concern, this will be raised immediately as a referral under Safeguarding Children Board procedures. An explanation around how being absent or missing from education can indicate various safeguarding concerns and forms of abuse.

Admissions register

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To ensure accurate data is collected to allow effective safeguarding, the school will inform the LA of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, where they:

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

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

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

- The full name of the pupil
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives
- The full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date that the pupil will start living there, if applicable
- The name of the pupil's new school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable
- The grounds for removal from the admissions register under regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

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

2. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

2.1. The Willows Primary School recognises the need to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation. Education staff are more likely to see victims on a regular basis than almost any other professional. They will notice recurrent or prolonged absences and significant changes in behaviour.

Therefore, we are key to identifying children at risk and will raise concerns at an early stage, to potentially halt the grooming process before sexual exploitation has begun.

2.2. We will follow the Safeguarding Children Board procedure which can be found at:-

[Microsoft Word - Section 4HA Child Sexual Exploitation \(staffscb.org.uk\)](https://staffscb.org.uk)

3.3 Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (DfE 2017.)

2.3. **Children cannot consent to being abused.** Irrespective of the child's age and even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them, it is not uncommon for children not to realise that they are being exploited.

2.4. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:-

- Children with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile phone;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour;
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development;
- Sexual activity/underage sexual activity;
- Sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex;
- Seen at known places of concern;
- Involved in abusive relationships;
- Intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations;
- Hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers or known perpetrators;
- 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;
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education;
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

2.5. Where a member of staff sees one or more of these indicators, or otherwise has cause for concern, this information will be recorded and passed, without delay, to the DSL following usual safeguarding procedures.

2.6. We will use the Sexual Exploitation Risk Factor Matrix (RFM) to identify pupils at low, medium or high risk of sexual exploitation. The Matrix can be found at section 14 – link below:-

2.7. Pupils will be referred to the CSE Panel if deemed appropriate, following completion of the Risk Factor Matrix.

2.8. We will also share information with Staffordshire Police Child Exploitation Team to contribute to their intelligence gathering to prevent and detect cases of CSE; so even apparently minor pieces of information should be given to the DSL.

- Staffordshire Police CSE Information Report form can be found at **appendix 15**.

2.9. Where we identify that a child under the age of 13 is involved in sexual activity, this will always be immediately reported to the police.

3. CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on child abuse). The school has a zero-tolerance approach to child on child approach, even if this has taken place off the school premises i.e. on-line at home. All concerns will be taken seriously. See DfE publication: 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1014224/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying) and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying;
- 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;
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages it);
- sexual harassment (including online), such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment
- voyeurism - upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

4.1 SEXTING

Sexting among children can be a common occurrence in which the police may need to become involved, depending upon the circumstances.

The DSL/DSO will record all incidents of sexting, and include both the actions taken and the actions not taken, together with the justifications for the decisions made.

In applying judgement to the sexting incident, the following will be considered:-

- Significant age difference between the sender/receiver involved.
- If there is any external coercion involved or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver.
- If you recognise the child as more vulnerable than is usual.
- If the image is of a severe or extreme nature.
- If the situation is not isolated and the image has been more widely distributed.
- If this is not the first time children have been involved in a sexting act.
- If other knowledge of either the sender or recipient may add cause for concern.

4.2 This is not an exhaustive list, but presence of the above will escalate concern. We will manage cases of sexting in line with the policies in the hyperlinks below – Responding to Sexting and Youth Produced Imagery, which is found at :-

[Microsoft Word - Responding to Sexting Guidance \(staffscb.org.uk\)](https://staffscb.org.uk/Microsoft-Word-Responding-to-Sexting-Guidance)

[Section 6Da - Responding to Youth Produced Sexual Imagery - September 2017 \(staffscb.org.uk\)](https://staffscb.org.uk/Section-6Da-Responding-to-Youth-Produced-Sexual-Imagery-September-2017)

5.0 SERIOUS VIOLENCE

All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are 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.

5.1 All staff are aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance:

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

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

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent from school.

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

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

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

6 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

7.1 The Willows Primary School recognises its duty to protect children and young people against the practice female genital mutilation and to immediately report to the police, under section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) where it is known that FGM has been carried out on a child. Teachers are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or physical evidence, of FGM on a pupil under the age of 18.

7.2 We will follow the Safeguarding Children Board procedure which can be found at:-

[Microsoft Word - Female Genital Mutilation \(staffsscb.org.uk\)](https://staffsscb.org.uk/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Female%20Genital%20Mutilation.docx)

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

7.4 Girls who are threatened with, or who have undergone FGM may withdraw from education, restricting their educational and personal development. They may feel unable to go against the wishes of their parents and consequently may suffer emotionally; they may appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn; present a sudden decline in her performance, aspirations or motivation.

7.5 **Signs that may indicate FGM is planned:-**

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony, procedure or celebration either abroad or in the UK;
- Family taking a long trip abroad;
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (examples include Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan;)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM;
- Child talks about going to be 'cut'

- Child talks about preparing for marriage or preparing to become a woman;

(Nb – families travelling abroad for long holidays is not in itself unusual, and not all families from the above named countries will practice FGM.)

7.6 Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities;
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued;
- Bladder or menstrual problems;
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable;
- Complaining about pain between the legs;
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about;
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the peers;
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity;
- Repeated urinal tract infection;
- Disclosure.

7.7 Where a member of staff sees one or more of these indicators, or otherwise has cause for concern, this information will be recorded and passed on without delay to the DSL following usual safeguarding procedures.

7.8 Staff should be aware of new mandatory reporting requirements with regards to *known* cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) which require teachers to personally report to the police (on the telephone number 101) cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Further details can be found Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024.

7.9 DFE multi agency practice guidelines for female-genital-mutilation (April 2016) :-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>.

7.10 NSPCC FGM helpline can be contacted on 0800 028 3550 or use the NSPCC email address to request support at: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

7.11 FGM is also included in the definition of 'honour-based' abuse (HBA), which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community, alongside forced marriage and breast ironing.

7.12 All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such.

7.13 Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise.

8 FORCED MARRIAGE

The Willows Primary School recognises the need to protect children and young people against forced marriage.

8.1 We will follow the Safeguarding Children Board procedure which can be found at:

www.staffsscp.org.uk/working-together-to-safeguard-children/guidance/forced-marriage/

8.2 A clear distinction must be made between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. A forced marriage is a marriage that is performed under duress and without the full and informed consent or free will of one or both parties (and is therefore very different to an arranged marriage.)

8.3 A forced marriage may be between children, a child and an adult, or between adults, and both males and females can be forced to marry against their will.

8.4 In referring to children, we refer to both primary and secondary school age children.

8.5 A forced marriage is considered to be honour based abuse. Since February 2023, it is a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used.

8.6 One Chance Rule - Where there are concerns about forced marriage, we will not speak to the family as professionals may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and we therefore must ensure that the appropriate intervention, response and support is initiated.

8.7 Staff will pass any concerns immediately to the DSL and child protection procedures will be activated.

8.8 Further information on the role of educational establishments can be found in Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage. pages 32-36.

The Forced Marriage Unit – tel: 020 7008 0151 e-mail: fmf@fco.gov.uk for advice or information.

9 PREVENTING RADICALISATION

9.1 The Willows Primary School recognises the need to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including that linked to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist, Al Qaeda / ISIS ideologies; Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and that linked to Animal Rights movements.

9.2 We also recognise the statutory duty placed upon us by s26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in having due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism, referred to as the “Prevent Duty”.

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

9.4 Extremism is defined as a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values of democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty and mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs.

9.5 There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources – pupils, staff or governors, or external sources - school community, external agencies or individuals.

9.6 Our curriculum is broad and balanced, promoting respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to share their views and recognise that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

9.7 We actively explore the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils, and promote fundamental British Values.

9.8 Potential indicators of a child is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views might include:-

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists.
- Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause.
- Loss of interest in friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause.
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause.
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause.
- Communications with others that suggests identification with an extremist group, cause or ideology.
- Using insulting or derogatory names for another group.
- Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person, which may include physical or verbal assault; provocative behaviour; derogatory name calling; prejudice related ridicule or name calling; refusal to co-operate; attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations; or condoning or supporting violence towards others.

9.9 If staff become aware that a child is vulnerable to being radicalised or exposed to extreme views, (including peer pressure, pressure from family members or other people, or from online;) this will be reported directly to the DSL/DSO.

9.10 The DSL/DSO will liaise with other appropriate agencies, and make referrals directly to the Channel Panel if deemed necessary, at prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

9.11 Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into extremism or terrorism. Engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary but we will encourage and support engagement at all stages.

9.12 The Prevent duty

Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, known as “**the Prevent duty**”. The Prevent duty will form part of the school’s wider safeguarding obligations.

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

Further information can be found on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board:-

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Prevent-Chanel-Guidance.pdf>

10 Pupils with family members in prison

Pupils with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of ‘Are you a young person with a family member in prison?’ from Action for Prisoners’ Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Pupils required to give evidence in court

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

Pupils will be provided with the booklet ‘Going to Court’ from HMCTS where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

11 PRIVATE FOSTERING

- a. The Willows Primary School recognises its duty to notify Children’s Social Care if a child is living in a private fostering arrangement.
- b. Private fostering refers to a situation where a child or young person under 16 years of age (under 18, if they are disabled) is being cared for by someone other than a parent or close relative for 28 days or more. (Close relatives are defined as grandparents, aunty, uncle or older sibling.) Carers may be members of the extended family (e.g. cousin, great aunt), friends of the family, or someone the child doesn’t know.
- c. This can include children sent from abroad to stay with family members, teenagers who may be living with the family of a friend, boyfriend or girlfriend and those living short term with host families while they take a course of study.
- d. All staff are responsible for asking questions to clarify family arrangements if there is a change of living arrangements / person caring for the child; of if the relationship between the child and carer of the living arrangements are unclear, confusing or concerning.

- e. Staff should also follow up any discussion with pupils about living arrangements which are unclear, confusing or concerning.
- f. If a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be living in a Private Fostering arrangement, they will report this without delay to the DSL/DSO.
- g. The DSL/DSO will encourage the parent/ carer to inform the Local Authority. Additionally we will report the private fostering arrangements to the Local Authority by contacting the IFD on 01782 235100.

12 ANTI BULLYING

- a. The Willows Primary School has zero tolerance with regards to bullying and we have an Anti-Bullying Policy which is set out in a separate document. This policy relates to all forms of bullying including cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying.
- b. The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum and anti-bullying assemblies.
- c. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Head teacher and the DSL/DSO will consider implementing child protection procedures.
- d. Staff members will neither allow nor condone bullying. To do so may lead to consideration under child protection and disciplinary procedures.

13 ONLINE SAFETY

- a. The Willows Primary School recognises our responsibility for online safety. We have an Online-Safety Policy which is set out in a separate document and includes guidance for all pupils in relation to Online Safety and using the internet and social media. The school's approach to online safety will be reviewed on an annual basis, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by pupils
- b. The Governing Board will ensure that ALL staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training including on-line safety, understanding the expectations, and roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- c. The Governing Board will ensure that The Willows has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and will regularly review their effectiveness.
- d. We have a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology (Guidance for the use of Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices and Pupil Mobile Phone/Device Policy).
- e. Staff will be aware of filtering systems in place, and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified.
- f. As part of the usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use.
- g. The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.
- h. The school will meet the Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards (see Filtering and Monitoring Policy).

- i. Evolve IT technicians will ensure that The Willows has the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place to safeguard systems, staff and pupils.

Personal electronic devices

The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones and cameras, by staff and pupils is closely monitored by the school, in accordance with the Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices Policy, and the Pupil Mobile Phone/Device Policy

Photographs and videos of pupils will be carefully planned before any activity with particular regard to consent and adhering to the school's Data Protection Policy and Photography Policy. The DPO will oversee the planning of any events where photographs and videos will be taken.

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

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

- j. Staff will report their concerns to the DSL if they believe that children are using the internet, mobile technology or social media inappropriately (e.g. sexting). In these instances the DSL will be contacted for advice on how to proceed with regards to talking to parents carers about Online Safety.
- k. Cyber-bullying by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.
- l. We have systems in place to prevent pupils being exposure to harm online. We have filters and monitoring systems in place which are regulated and risk assessed.
- m. If we become aware that a pupil may be accessing materials inappropriate to their age, (including Facebook if under 13 years of age;) sending inappropriate e-mails, texts or images; or playing on games that are unsuitable (for example, games which have an 18 certificate;) we will contact parents to discuss our concerns and to raise parents' awareness about the potential risk to their children and our duties to safeguard, which may involve referral to other agencies.
 - n. If staff become aware that a pupil is vulnerable to harm online, this will be reported immediately to the DSL and safeguarding procedures will be implemented.
 - o. In some extreme cases the Police may become involved if a child is at risk of exploitation due to their use of the internet or social media.
 - p. For further information see **Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex D.**

13 CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. We understand the importance of providing as much information as possible as part of the referral process to allow assessments to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any possible abuse.

For further information see **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

14 CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

14.1 For the purpose of this policy, “**child criminal exploitation**” is defined as: where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity, for any, or all, of the following reasons:

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

14.2 Specific forms of CCE can include:

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

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

14.4 CCE may be in effect even if the criminal activity appears consensual and can happen through the use of technology.

Identifying cases

- a. School staff will be aware of the following indicators that a child is the victim of CCE:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part

15 MENTAL HEALTH

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

15.2 Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems – the school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional.

15.3 Staff will be encouraged to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one.

15.4 Staff who have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to the DSL or a deputy.

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

16 HOMELESSNESS

16.1 The DSL and deputy(s) will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible.

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

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

16.3 Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSCS where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.

17 COUNTY LINES

17.1 For the purpose of this policy, “**County lines**” refers to organised criminal networks or gangs exploiting children to move drugs and money into one or more areas (within the UK). Drugs and money may also be stored by children for the purpose of criminal activity.

17.2 Staff will be made aware of pupils with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

17.3 Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, county lines activity will immediately report all concerns to the DSL.

17.4 The DSL will consider referral to the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis and consider involving local services and providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

17.5 Indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines active include the following:

- Persistently going missing or being found out of their usual area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls
- Relationships with controlling or older individuals or groups
- Leaving home without explanation
- Evidence of physical injury or assault that cannot be explained
- Carrying weapons
- Sudden decline in school results
- Becoming isolated from peers or social networks
- Self-harm or significant changes in mental state
- Parental reports of concern
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owing a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

18 Child abduction and community safety incidents

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

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

Pupils will be provided with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe outdoors.

19 Modern slavery

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

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

20 Cyber-Crime

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

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

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

21 Virginity testing and hymenoplasty

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

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

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

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

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

Victims face barriers in coming forward, e.g. they may not know that the abuse was abnormal or wrong at the time, and may feel shameful, having been taught that speaking out against family and/or the community is wrong, or being scared about the repercussions of speaking out. The school will educate pupils about the harms of these practices and dispel myths, e.g. the belief that virginity determines the worth of a woman, and establish an environment where pupils feel safe enough to make a disclosure.

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX 6 – Allegations of Abuse Made Against Other Pupils

- 1.1. The Willows Primary School believes that all pupils have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment, free from harm by adults or other pupils.
- 1.2. The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse, as confirmed in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy's introduction.
- 1.3. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under our Behaviour Policy.
- 1.4. **Child on Child abuse** - Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding allegations may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
- 1.5. To be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, it is likely that some of the following features will be found:-

The allegation:-

- is made against a pupil in relation to their behaviour towards a more vulnerable pupil;
 - is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence;
 - raises risk factors for other pupils in the school;
 - indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil and their actions;
 - indicates that children/young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil.
- 1.6. Examples of a safeguarding allegation against a pupil could include (but are not limited to):-
- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
 - Physical Abuse – for example, violence (particularly pre-planned;) or forcing others to use drugs or alcohol (this may require an online content);
 - Emotional Abuse – for example, blackmail or extortion, threats and intimidation;
 - Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages it);
 - Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos;
 - Upskirting;

- 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 include an online element).

1.7. Where pupils are involved in gang activity, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people.

2. Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns presented by a pupil.

2.1. We will provide a developmentally appropriate PSHE syllabus which develops pupils' understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.

2.2. Have systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, believed and valued.

2.3. Deliver targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk.

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

2.5 All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who evidence suggests are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

2.6 All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ pupils, who evidence suggests are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils. The school's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

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

2.7 The school's procedures for managing allegations of peer-on-peer abuse are outlined in the Peer-on-Peer Abuse Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Exclusion Policy, where relevant.

3 What to do

3.1 When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the DSL/DSO should be informed.

- 3.2 A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.
- 3.3 The DSL/DSO may contact the locality social worker or other relevant agency to discuss the case. It is possible that Children's Social Care are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person.
- 3.4 The DSL/DSO will follow through the actions from the discussion and make any referrals necessary, keeping a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome in the files of both pupils.
- 3.5 If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police will be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim).
- 3.6 Where neither Children's Social Care nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation will take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures.
- 3.7 In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be undertaken and an individual risk management plan will be put in place to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and that the pupil concerned does not become a target for malicious allegations.
- 3.8 The plan will be reviewed continuously and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

APPENDIX 7 – Dealing with Disclosures Made by a Child

1. ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF

Staff will be aware that pupils may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL, or deputy DSL, if they have a concern about a pupil.

- 1.1. The Willows Primary School will take seriously any disclosures of abuse, neglect or exploitation made by a pupil.
- 1.2. When dealing with disclosures we don't 'lead pupils', make suggestions about what may have happened or who may be responsible, and we don't investigate what is being disclosed.
- 1.3. However, it may not always be clear from what a pupil first tells us, whether we are dealing with a safeguarding issue or not, and therefore we may need to clarify what is being said.
- 1.4. **TED QUESTIONS** are open questions that we will use to clarify or get a little more information about what has happened, so that we can initiate the right response, intervention and support:-
 - Tell me what happened
 - Explain to me what happened
 - Describe what happened
- 1.5. When talking to pupils, we will take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, (which may not be English and therefore translation services might need to be sought;) and consider how a child with a disability may need support in communicating.
- 1.6. The following guidance should be followed:-
 - Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
 - Allow the child to talk freely.
 - Accept what is being said.
 - Do not ask direct or leading questions – use only open questions, if necessary, to clarify what is being said or how something has happened (TED questions above).
 - Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling you.
 - Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
 - Do not make promises that you may not be able to keep.
 - Do not give your personal opinion.
 - Do not talk about your own personal experiences.
 - Do not promise confidentiality – it may be necessary to tell the DSL/DSO and to refer the child to Children's Social Care or inform the police.

- Do not ask the child to write anything down (this may be seen as a statement, and we are not trained to take statements).
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told – **see appendix 8** (over page)
- Inform the DSL/DSO without delay, using your agreed system/protocol. This may mean completing a hand written record of concern form or logging onto an electronic system, recording what's happened and sending it to your DSL/DSO. (A template record of concern form can be found at Appendix 16)

1.7. Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL.

APPENDIX 8 – Action To Be Taken If You Have A Concern About A Child

Staff will be aware that pupils may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL, or deputy DSL, if they have a concern about a pupil.

Action to be taken by:-	What action to take if you have concerns
Any member of staff (governor, volunteer, contractor, activity provider)	1. Report your concern via CPOMS and discuss your concerns with the DSL or DSO (Sarah Thursfield or Jayne Ellis), or in their absence, with the Deputy DSL (Charlotte Beltran or Amanda Ball) as soon as possible, before the child leaves for the day. <u>It is important that the child is not sent home at the end of the day without taking the right protective action.</u> 2. Complete the record of concern via CPOMS which will alert the DSL/DSO. 3. If the DSL/DSO or deputy is not available, you can use IFD on 01782 235100 4. Inform the DSL/DSO about your consultation with IFD and what actions you have taken. Ensure all actions and decisions are recorded CPOMS
Action to be taken by:-	If you are concerned that the child is at risk of significant harm (Level 4)
DSL, DSO or Deputy DSL	1. You have used the Threshold framework 2023 'Accessing the right help at the right time' and believe the child is at risk of significant harm. (section 47 child protection) https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/downloads/file/78/thresholds-for-intervention-june-25 2. If you are unsure, use IFD 3. Once you are sure that a child protection referral is required, inform the family of your intention to refer to Children's Social Care, (IFD) and why (<u>unless</u> to do so would increase the risk of harm; hinder the prevention/detection of a serious crime; lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm) 4. Contact IFD (235100) without delay. Ensure you have all relevant details to hand and provide as much information as you can about your concerns. See page 39. 5. If you believe that the child is in immediate danger, or you suspect a crime has been committed, you must also contact the police immediately. 6. Confirm your referral via a telephone consultation with IFD to share concerns and a decision/advice will be given whilst on the call. 7. Record all your discussions and decision-making on IFD (If the child does not have a stand-alone child protection file, you will need to create one.)

	8. Update/start the chronology. Continue to update the child's file and chronology as the investigation and resulting work continues.
Action to be taken by:-	You do not think there is a risk of significant harm, but the child has highly complex needs and may be experiencing compromised parenting. (Level 4)
DSL, DSO or Deputy DSL	1. You have used the SOTSCP) Threshold framework 2023 'Accessing the right help at the right time' to assess the levels of need and believe the child has complex needs and may be experiencing compromised parenting. (Section 17 child in need.) 2. If you are unsure, contact IFD for advice. 3. Once you are sure that a child in need referral is required, you will need to explain to the family your intentions to refer and why; and obtain their consent to do so. 4. Contact the IFD (235100) without delay if your referral is urgent. Ensure you have all relevant details to hand and provide as much information as you can about your concerns. 5. Confirm your referral via the portal https://childrensportallcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home 6. IFD will inform you once they have processed your referral with an update or request further information. 7. IFD may decide, in consultation with you, that the child's needs are at Level 2 or 3 and that the school is best placed to provide support. See Early Help below. 8. Record all your discussions and decision-making on CPOMS. Add this, and a copy of the referral form as a file onto CPOMS. 9. Update/start the chronology. Continue to update the child's file and chronology as the investigation and resulting work continues
Action to be taken by:-	You do not think there is a need for children social care to be involved but multi-agency support is required (Level 3)
Early help champion DSL or Deputy DSL Any staff member in conjunction with one of the above	1. You have used the SOTSCP) Threshold framework 2023 'Accessing the right help at the right time', have completed an Initial Early Help Assessment but the family's needs are more complex and they would benefit from an early help assessment and multi-agency support. (Level 3) 2. Identify the most appropriate person to discuss the reasons for the assessment, how it will benefit the child and family, and gain consent. 3. Refer into the portal and register the Initial Early Help https://childrensportallcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marfprof 4. Appoint a lead worker to complete the Early Help Assessment form with the parent/child. 5. Engage with other professionals who will help to provide the multi-agency support and intervention that is required by the family. Refer to Early Intervention Service where appropriate (using your initial early help as the referral.) 6. If the family refuses to consent, we will log this on CPOMS and we make a judgement about whether the needs of the child will escalate or the child will become unsafe without help and seek advice from other professionals.

Action to be taken by:-	You do not think there is a need for children social care to be involved and we can meet the additional needs of the family (Level 2)
Early help champion DSL or Deputy DSL Any staff member in conjunction with one of the above	1. You have used the SOTSCP) Threshold framework 2023 'Accessing the right help at the right time' and believe that we (the school) are able to meet the additional needs of the child /family through the use of an Initial Early Help Assessment. (Level 2) 2. We will undertake an Initial Early Help Assessment as a means of providing families with the help and support they need to prevent issues from escalating (and avoid involvement from Children's Social Care.) A referral into Family Focus (Level 2) support may be actioned. 3. Identify the most appropriate person to discuss the reasons for the assessment, how it will benefit the child and family, and gain consent. 4. Register the Initial Early Help via the portal https://childrensportallcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marfprof 5. Appoint a lead worker to complete the Early Help Assessment form with the parent/child. 6. The lead worker will provide support in the school and/or refer the child / their family to the appropriate agency. 7. If the family refuses to consent, we will log this on CPOMS, and we will make a judgement about whether the needs of the child will escalate.

Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Any pupil may benefit from early help, but in particular, staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from education, care or from home.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or Pupil Referral Unit.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Have family members in prison, or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage.

- Are privately fostered.
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect in other ways.

Role of the Lead Worker in Early Help

The most appropriate professional to undertake the (Initial) Early Help Assessment is someone who has regular contact with the child/ren and has a relationship with them and their family – this will usually be our DSO or Assistant Head Teacher. An Early Help Assessment is a holistic approach in identifying a family's needs and the support that is necessary to address their presenting needs.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to CSCS for assessment for statutory services if the pupil's situation is not improving or is worsening.

The Lead Worker will be responsible for:-

- undertaking the (Initial) Early Help Assessment with the family;
- ensuring that the (Initial) Early Help Assessment considers both the needs and strengths of all family members;
- engaging with other agencies and professionals to provide the support required that has been identified through the (Initial) Early Help Assessment; and
- co-ordinating the Early Help Plan with the family, ensuring there is no duplication and that the support is manageable for the family.

All agencies/professionals will be responsible for:-

- providing the support that it identified through the Early Help Assessment;
- being flexible about the duration and intensity of support provided based on the needs of the family;
- offering practical 'hands on' support;
- challenging family members where necessary, so that things can improve for them in the long term;
- not giving up on families easily and persisting, even when things are difficult.

Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm

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

Pupils who need social workers

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

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

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

Home-educated children

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

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

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

LAC and PLAC

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

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

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

The DSL will be provided with the necessary details of pupils' social workers and the VSH, and, for PLAC, personal advisers.

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

Pupils with SEND

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

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

When reporting concerns or making referrals for pupils with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a pupil with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's SENCO or **Inclusion Lead**, as well as the pupil's parents where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil's needs are met effectively. If required, get specialist support by signposting to SENDIASS or Mencap.

LGBTQ+ pupils

The fact that a pupil may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.

Caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It is recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and support. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

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

Pupils requiring mental health support

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

Use of the school premises for non-school activities

Where the governing board hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe.

Where the governing board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The governing board will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The governing board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The school follows the DfE guidance on After-school clubs, community activities and tuition Safeguarding guidance for providers September 2023, and documents evidence that external providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place.

Extracurricular activities and clubs

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

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

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

Alternative provision

The school will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare and safeguarding during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, the school will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff, and must be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

APPENDIX 9 – Making a Referral to Children’s Social Care

- 1.1. It will almost always be the DSL, DSO, Deputy DSL or another member of the senior leadership team that makes referrals into Children Social Care. However, all staff know how to make a referral should they need to, in the absence of the above mentioned members of staff.
- 1.2. Referrals to Children Social Care are by telephone to the **Integrated Front Door** on 235100 during office hours and outside of office hours Emergency Duty Team on 234234, **if urgent. All other referrals via the portal using: <https://childrensportallcs.stoke.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marfprof>**
- 1.3. Before making the call, ensure that you have all of the information to hand so that you can provide detailed and accurate information and answer any questions.
- 1.4. **Give as much information as you can about the child and family, including:-**
 - Child’s full name;
 - Parents’ names;
 - Full address and contact telephone number for parents;
 - Date of birth for the child;
 - Family’s ethnic origin;
 - Does the child have a disability?
 - Are there any additional support needs? (Learning difficulties; communication needs)
 - Any information regarding the family composition; for example - other siblings in the household (how old and what school do they attend?) Who else lives at the house? Who usually looks after the child?
 - Do you have details of the GP or any other agencies involved with the family?
- 1.5. **Highlight the concerns with evidence:-**
 - What are your concerns?
 - What is the trigger for this referral?
 - What is your evidence?
 - Use the Guide to Levels of Need document to evidence your referral/concerns.
- 1.6. **Clarify that your information has been received and understood as intended.**
- 1.7. **Do the parents / carers have knowledge of this referral?**
 - What is their response likely to be if professionals undertake a home visit?
 - Are there any risks to staff?
 - Are there further risks to child if the parents are made aware of the referral?
 - Have they refused to give consent?
- 1.8. **Early Help Assessment Refusal?**
 - Has an Early Help Assessment been completed with the family? If so when?
 - Attach all assessment documentation where possible.
 - Have the family refused an Early Help Assessment?

1.9. Provide your details:

- Your full name, job title and relationship to the child.
- Your contact details, including work mobile if you are unlikely to be in the office.

APPENDIX 10 – Information Sharing and Consent

- 1.1. Staff at The Willows Primary School are committed to working openly and honestly with parents, carers and other agencies in order to ensure that pupil's needs are met. It is essential that everyone working with children can confidently share information. This is necessary not only to safeguard and protect children from harm but also to work together to support families to improve outcomes for all.
- 1.2. We may share information about parents, carers or children for investigations undertaken by Children's Social Care.
- 1.3. We will exercise professional curiosity by proactively seeking out information as well as sharing it. This means checking with other professionals whether they have information, and speaking to pupils alone.
- 1.4. The Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information. It is there to ensure that personal information is managed in a sensible way and that a balance is struck between a person's privacy and public protection.
- 1.5. We will share any concerns we have with parents at an early stage, unless this would put a child at greater risk or compromise an investigation. Parents must be clear that our responsibilities are for safeguarding and protecting children and that this involves sharing information about them with other professionals.
- 1.6. **It is expected that we will seek the consent of parents or carers to make a referral to Children's Social Care** under s.17 Children's Act – **Child in Need**. If parents refuse to give consent but we decide to continue with the referral, we will make this clear to Children's Social Care when we contact them.
- 1.7. Any decision to refer the pupil without the parents' consent will be recorded in the pupil's child protection file with a full explanation for the decision.
- 1.8. **We do not need parents' consent to make a referral if we consider the child is in need of protection**, under s.47 Children's Act; although in most cases we will inform them of the child protection referral.
- 1.9. **However we will not inform parents of referrals if we believe that:-**
 - This would place the child or someone else at increased risk of harm;
 - It would prejudice the prevention or detection of a crime, or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation;
 - It would lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries into allegations of significant harm.
- 1.10. Any decision not to discuss concerns with a pupil's parents or carers will be recorded in the pupil's child protection file with a full explanation for the decision.

- 1.11. Consent is not necessary in cases where Children's Social Care are making child protection enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and therefore when contacted by Children's Social Care, we can comply with their requests for information without seeking consent. Staff members must record what information has been shared and why.
- 1.12. If we are in any doubt about the need to seek consent, we will seek advice from the locality social worker.
- 1.13. Keep a record of your decision to share information, with or without consent, and the reasons for it. Remember also that it is just as important to keep a record of why you decided not to share information as why you did so.

2. RECORD KEEPING VIA CPOMS

- 2.1. Good record keeping is an important part of the school's accountability to pupils and their families and will help us in meeting our key responsibility to respond appropriately to welfare concerns about children.
- 2.2. Records should be factual, accurate, relevant, up to date and auditable. They should support monitoring, risk assessment and planning for children and enable informed and timely decisions about appropriate action to take.
- 2.3. The DSL will ensure that records are maintained appropriately for pupils with safeguarding concerns and stand-alone files are created and maintained in line with requirements of the above guidance.

3. DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH THE PUPIL, PARENTS OR CARERS

- 3.1. Staff at The Willows Primary School are committed to working openly and honestly with parents and carers in order to ensure that their child's needs are met.
- 3.2. This means that in most cases, any concerns the school may have about a pupil, will be discussed with parents or carers. If the matter is one of urgency, and parents need to be informed then the person reporting the concern should speak to the child's class teacher in person to alert them of the concern. This is because parents and carers need to know when we are worried about their child, so that we can work together to address any issues or concerns.
- 3.3. **Professional curiosity** will be exercised by staff, particularly where there is a concern about a pupil. This means that staff may ask questions of the pupil, parents or carers in order to clarify or ascertain the necessary facts to make a decision regarding what (if any) action to take.
- 3.4. We will abide by the principles set out above regarding information sharing and consent. When we make the referral, we will agree with Children's Social Care what the pupil and parents will be told, by whom and when.

APPENDIX 11 – Working with parents and carers

- 1.1. The Willows Primary School is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child/ren and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.
- 1.2. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.
- 1.3. When new pupils join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Children's Social Care or other agencies.
- 1.4. We will abide by the principles of information sharing and consent as outlined in Appendix 11. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the Designated Safeguarding Lead making a referral **to the Integrated Front Door (IFD)** in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.
- 1.5. In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:
 - Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
 - The relationship between the child and the adults (as private fostering arrangements must be referred into Children's Social Care.)
 - Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
 - Emergency contact details for responsible people to contact in the event that parents/carers cannot be contacted;
 - Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).
 - Any legal or criminal changes which effects parental responsibility e.g. Bail condition, court orders, MARAC arrangements (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference).
- 1.6. The School will retain this information on the pupil file. The school will only share information about pupils with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil or where a parent has given permission and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.
- 1.7. The school will share information with statutory agencies as outlined in appendix 11 and 13.

APPENDIX 12 – Children’s Social Care response

2. CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE RESPONSE TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

- 2.1. Once Children’s Social Care has accepted our referral as needing a social-care-led response (Level 4 on the Guide to Levels of Need), a social work practitioner and their manager will evaluate the concerns to identify the sources and levels of risk and to agree what protective action may be necessary.
- 2.2. The evaluation of concerns and risks involve deciding whether:-
- the child needs immediate protection and urgent action is necessary; or
 - the child is suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm and enquiries need to be made under section 47 of the Children Act 1989; or
 - the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
- 2.3. We will cooperate with Children’s Social Care and the police in any emergency action they take using their legal powers for immediate protection of the child.
- 2.4. We will participate in any multi-agency discussions (strategy discussions), if invited to do so, and share information about the child and their family to plan the response to concerns.
- 2.5. We will share information about the child and their family for section 47 enquiries and section 17 assessments undertaken by Children’s Social Care.
- 2.6. We will ensure that a relevant staff member participates in all initial and review child protection conferences, that we are invited to attend. The staff member will work together with other agencies to discuss the need for and agree to an outcome-focused child protection plan and will ensure that the child’s wishes and views are considered in their own right.
- 2.7. If we are members of the core group to implement a plan, we will ensure a relevant staff member participates in all core group meetings.
- 2.8. We will ensure that we complete all actions allocated to us as part of the outcome-focused plan, whether a child protection plan or a child in need plan, in a timely way.
- 2.9. We will continue to monitor pupils once their plans are ended to ensure that they are supported and kept safe.

2.10. PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE AND DISAGREEMENTS

- 2.11. The Willows Primary School recognises that working with children and families, and in particular child protection work, can be stressful and complex, as well as involving uncertainty and strong feelings. To ensure that the best decisions are made for children, we need to be able to challenge one another's practice.
- 2.12. We will promote a culture within our school that enables all staff members to raise, without fear of repercussions, any concerns they may have about the management of child protection in the school. This may include raising concerns about decisions, actions and inactions by colleagues in respect of individual children.
- 2.13. If necessary, staff members can speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the head teacher, the chair of governors or with the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- 2.14. Cooperation across agencies is crucial; professionals need to work together, using their skills and experience, to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences and case management.
- 2.15. **If there are any professional disagreements with practitioners from other agencies, that the staff member involved has been unable to resolve informally, the DSL or the head teacher will raise concerns formally with the relevant agency's safeguarding lead in line with LSCB escalation policy.**
- 2.16. The escalation policy can be found at the link below:-

<https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/downloads/file/9/sotscp-escalation-policy>

APPENDIX 13 – Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

- 1.1. The Willows Primary School aims to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for pupils at our school.
- 1.2. We do recognise however, that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

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

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

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

- 1.3. The Willows Primary School follows the local Safeguarding Children Board procedures - Managing Allegations against Adults Working with Children and Young People :-

[Microsoft Word - SSCB word template-Portrait \(staffsscb.org.uk\)](https://staffsscb.org.uk)

- 1.4. If an allegation is made, or information is received about an adult who works (including supply staff) or volunteers in our school which raises concerns, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Head teacher, Sarah Thursfield immediately and complete a Low-Level concern referral form – found in staff share/current/safeguarding/Low-Level Concern Form.
- 1.5. Should an allegation be made against the Head teacher, this will be reported to the Chair of Governors, Mr John Perry.
- 1.6. In the event that neither the Head teacher nor Chair of Governors is contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Head teacher or the Vice Chair of Governors.
- 1.7. Any member of staff, supply staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Head teacher or Chair of Governors can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer directly.

- 1.8. We also have a Whistle Blowing Policy which is accessible to all staff.
- 1.9. When a concern is raised about an adult in our school, the Head teacher (or other appropriate person, as above;) will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the earliest opportunity (and certainly within 1 working day.) No one will undertake further investigations until they receive advice from the LADO. Where an allegation is made against a supply teacher the Headteacher will also immediately contact the supply agency. The school will continue to support any investigation that is required.
- 1.10. The Local Authority Designated Officer will convene a strategy meeting when there are concerns that a person in a position of trust has:-
- *behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;*
 - *possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or*
 - *behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.*
- 1.11. We will work closely with Children's Social Care and the police, if they are involved, to support with any assessment or investigation as required.
- 1.12. The staff member who is the subject of the allegation will be advised to contact their union, professional association or a colleague for support, (depending on the outcome of the strategy discussion/meeting with the LADO). HR will ensure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support, if necessary, through occupational health or welfare arrangements.
- 1.13. If the LADO deems that the referral does not meet the criteria for his involvement, we may still undertake our own investigation into the alleged events and if necessary, invoke disciplinary procedures.
- 1.14. The school has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
- 1.15. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and HR.
- 1.16. **FOR INFORMATION** - The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is also available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
- Telephone free: - 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday.)
 - Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

APPENDIX 14 – Safer Recruitment

- 1.1. Our school has robust recruitment and vetting procedures to help to deter, reject and prevent unsuitable people from working or volunteering within our school. The school's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy. As stated in KCSIE, school has the authority to check social media/on line accounts as part of their vetting process.
- 1.2. Our job advertisements and application packs make explicit reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding children, including clear statements in the job description and person specification about the staff member's safeguarding responsibilities.
- 1.3. We require evidence of original academic certificates.
- 1.4. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview.
- 1.5. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them or if there are gaps in employment.
- 1.6. Short-listed candidates will be informed that on-line searches will be carried out.
- 1.7. An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:
 - Are responsible on a daily basis for the care or supervision of children.
 - Regularly work in the school at times when children are on the premises.
 - Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

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

The governing board will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK. **For any candidate who has lived or worked outside the UK, we will undertake the same level of checks as for those within the UK. This will include obtaining a criminal records check or certificate of good conduct from the relevant country(ies) for the past 10 years, in addition to the enhanced DBS check. We will follow the guidance in KCSIE 2025 Annex C on the specific steps to take for such checks.**

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

Staff suitability

All centres providing care for pupils under the age of eight must ensure that staff and volunteers working in these settings are not disqualified from doing so under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018. A person may be disqualified if they:

- Have certain orders or other restrictions placed upon them.

- Have committed certain offences.

All staff members are required to sign the declaration form provided in the appendices of this policy confirming that they are not disqualified from working in a schooling environment. A disqualified person will not be permitted to continue working at the school, unless they apply for and are granted a waiver from Ofsted. The school will provide support with this process.

Ongoing suitability

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

Referral to the DBS

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

- 1.7. At least one member on every short listing and interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training.
- 1.8. We maintain a Single Central Register of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. Guest visitors will also be checked in line with statutory requirements and risk assessed robustly. The Governing Body will check the SCR on a term basis and record accuracy and actions.

Single Central Record (SCR)

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

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

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

For agency and third-party supply staff, the school will also record whether written confirmation from the employment business supplying the member of staff has been received which indicates that all the necessary checks have been conducted (i.e. all the same checks the school would perform on any individual working in the school or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery) and the date that confirmation was received.

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

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

The school is free to record any other information it deems relevant.

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

APPENDIX 15 – Staffordshire Police CSE Information Report



Staffordshire Police CSE Information Report

Gathering Intelligence about Child Sexual Exploitation

Staffordshire Police have devised a process by which agencies, parents, carers and young people can provide information about perpetrators. This is gathered and used in situations where there may be no evidence available or the victim is either unwilling or unable to provide a police statement. This occurs in the vast majority of cases of sexual exploitation. Therefore, the opportunity to provide intelligence means that the police can build a sufficient picture over a period of time and act upon it. This could potentially interrupt and disrupt criminal activity where young people are being exploited.

What to collect?

Information on child sexual exploitation includes details on:-

- Suspects – names, nicknames, addresses, dates of birth and descriptions of suspects of CSE
- Vehicles – registration numbers, partial registration numbers, make and model, colour and distinguishing features or marks of vehicles used by suspects
- Telephones – details of phone numbers and mobile phones used by suspects and details of any text messages of phone calls made by them or to them
- Locations – details of locations where offences have taken place or suspects/victims frequent
- Offences – details of criminal offences that have not been recorded by the police either because the victim has not been identified or the victim denies them or refuses to cooperate with the police
- Date and times – that incidents occurred or suspects or vehicles seen
- Links – between suspects, vehicles, locations and young people identified at risk of CSE

The more detailed and precise the information is the better the quality of intelligence. The intelligence forms are not to be used for the following:

- To report a crime
- To pass information to the police about a crime that is already being investigated
- To raise a child protection concern

Intelligence can be reported from 3 perspectives:

1. Disclosure by a Young Person at Risk
2. Incident Witnessed by a Professional
3. Information from another Person

Submit the completed intelligence form onto the Child Exploitation Team.

childexploitation@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

If you do not have a secure e-mail facility then please call CET on 101 ext. 3604 to discuss

Please note – this form is **NOT** a referral form.

Agencies should refer to the CSE Policy document Staffs Section 4Ha, S-o-T Section D14 and follow the process outlined. Referrals should be made to First Response (Staffordshire) or the Safeguarding Referral Team (Stoke-on-Trent) or to the Police. This form is to collect intelligence only and may then be used to assist police in building a case.



Staffordshire Police – Child Sexual Exploitation Information Report

Date/Time of report:

Details of Professional submitting:

Name					
Post / Job Title					
Agency					
Contact Details					
Witnessed Incident		Professional		Member of the Public	

Details of Child/Young Person (if known):

Name	
Age	
Address	

If the information is from a 3rd party are they be willing to engage with the Police? Yes / No

Please provide information: Include as much detail as possible re names /descriptions /nicknames/ vehicle details/addresses etc.:

