



Child Protection POLICY

Rednock School
Where everyone matters



Date of Ratification: September 2025
Date of Review: September 2026
Responsibility of: Kerala Cole and Demelza Barker

Child Protection

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Important Contacts

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Anna Brogan	anna.brogan@rednockschool.org.uk
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Safeguarding Governor	Jane Barker Doe	jane.barker-doe@rednockschool.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Katie Norton	katie.norton@rednockschool.org.uk

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2025) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils

[The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques

[The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

The [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

[Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

The [Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)

The [Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

The [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.
- **Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.
- **Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.
- **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes** (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams or the sharing of computer-generated imagery of this nature.
- **Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- An integrated care bodies for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. We work hard to address student's individual circumstances through our curriculum and pastoral support and work with outside agencies.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10);
- Are young carers;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- Have English as an additional language;
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation;
- Are asylum seekers;
- Are members of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller communities;
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs;
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12);
- Are absent vol from education;
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the three safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing students for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment.

This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour for learning policy;
- Pastoral support system;
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships;
 - Boundaries and consent;
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality;
 - Body confidence and self-esteem;
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour);
 - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support;
 - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.

5.1 All Staff

All staff will read and understand part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually. Once staff have read this guidance they have to complete and pass an online assessment to prove that they have read and understood it.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding leads (DSL) the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment;
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play;

- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals;
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation;
- The need to have an understanding that as young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside their family. This is known as contextual safeguarding;
- To have an awareness of online safety for students including the school's requirement to filter and monitor their internet usage;
- The need to be aware of areas within the school where safeguarding needs may be more prevalent and play a role in mitigating any risk e.g. less transparent areas of the grounds.

All staff will reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe.

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSLs are Kerala Cole and Demelza Barker. The DSLs take lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. There are a further five deputy DSLs all of whom are identifiable through our in-school posters. Staff should make themselves acquainted with this information.

During term time, the DSLs will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of school hours the DSLs can be contactable via the email address cpconcern@rednockschool.or.uk If the DSLs are not available, the Headteacher will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters;
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so;
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly;
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour;
- Have responsibility for online safety including processes for filtering and monitoring.

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues;
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate;

- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies;
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour;
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support;
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in their job description.

5.3 The Governing Body

The governing body will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development;
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation;
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness;
- Review the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discuss with IT staff and service providers about what needs to be done to support the school to meet these standards;
- Make sure the DSL takes lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place as part of their role;
- Make sure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and in line with advice from the safeguarding partners;
- Make sure staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of their safeguarding training;
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
- Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing body (this is always a different person from the DSL).

Make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support;
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies;
- The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns;
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
- That this policy reflects that, children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised;

- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll);
- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed;
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate;
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate.

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety as well as the Prevent Duty.

Section 16 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction;
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect;
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website;
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent;
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly;
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate;
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this;
- Ensuring that online safety training is included in staff safeguarding and child protection training.

6. Confidentiality

In terms of confidentiality staff at Rednock are guided by the following principles, in that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Consideration should always be given as to which members of staff are deemed necessary to share safeguarding information with. This may result in sharing limited or partial information as required.

- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children;
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe;
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk;
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies;
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk);

The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.

Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes:

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system;
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved;
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 15, and allegations of abuse against staff. This policy should be read and acted upon in association with our school's data protection policy as well as the school's privacy notice.

7. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean "the DSL (or deputy DSL)".

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

To make a referral to Gloucestershire Children's multi agency safeguarding team (MASH) you should follow the guidance found here MASH which will take you through to the front door services, or alternatively call: 01452 426565

National information on how to report abuse can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them: allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions; stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you: do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected;
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a student is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Any teacher who either:

Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth **MUST** immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **student under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a student is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine students.

Any member of staff who suspects a student is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare. Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Early help assessment

If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

Early help referrals are considered regularly as part of the fortnightly community panel meetings as well as the in school, fortnightly, Early Help Drop-In Advice Service.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person

who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves. Gloucestershire escalation of concerns policy can be found within the GSCP website.

7.5 If you have Concerns about Extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with terrorism or being drawn into terrorism, or the social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a student. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger;
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group;
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related.
-

7.6 If you have a Mental Health Concern

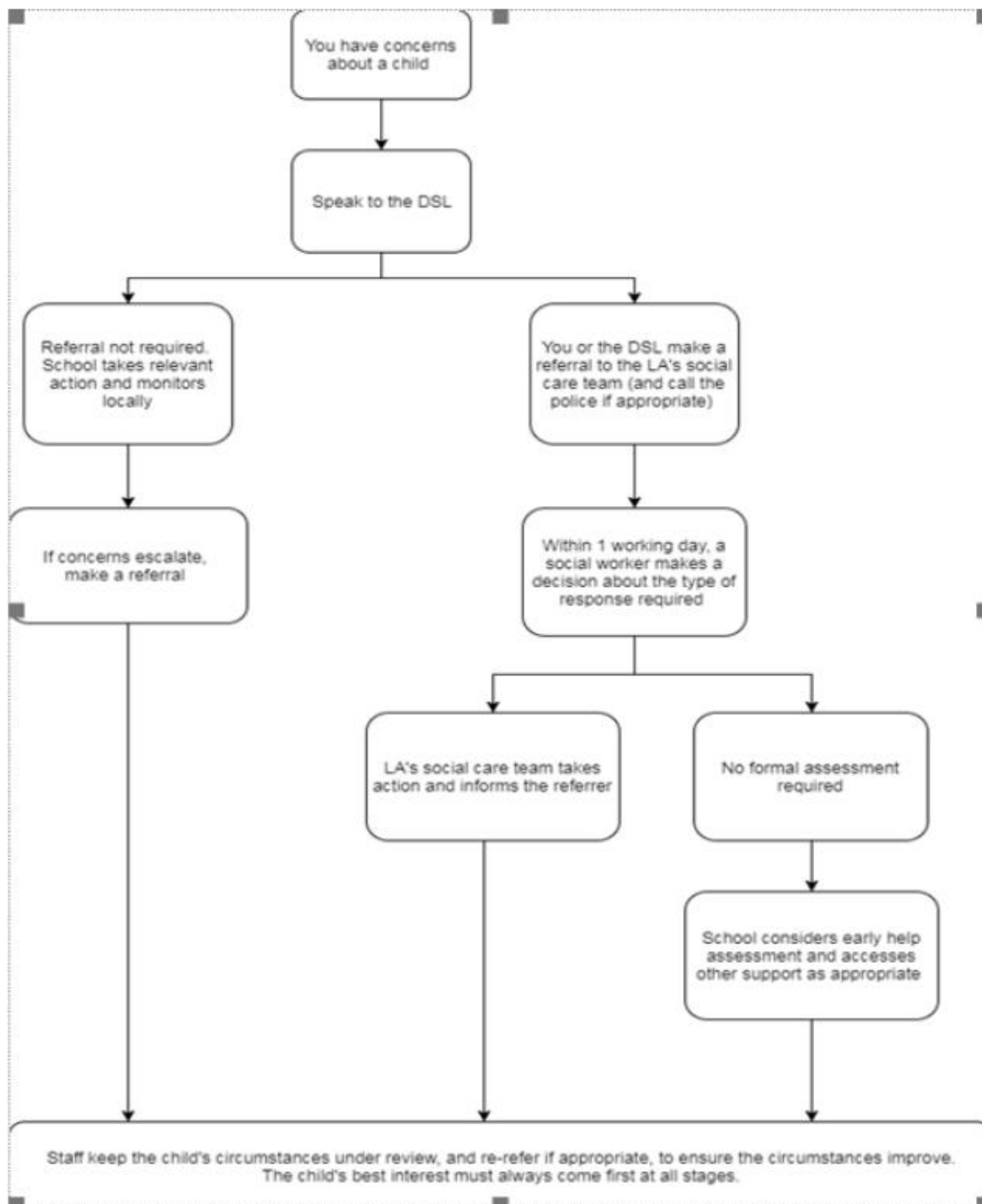
Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4. If you have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

For more information regarding mental health in education refer to the Department for Education guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools.

Figure 1: Procedure if you have concerns about a child’s welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, you should follow your safeguarding procedures and inform the LADO as you would with any other safeguarding allegation.

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other students

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for students.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Most cases of students hurting other students will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;
- Could put students in the school at risk;
- Is violent;
- Involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol;
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

If a student makes an allegation of abuse against another student:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it;
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence;
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s);
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate;
- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images;
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female students, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys;
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure students are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below);
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously;
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners;
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed;
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports;
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”;
- That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to;
 - A friend may make a report;
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation;
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong;
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
- That a student harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy;
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it;
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns;
- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly.

We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or LA children's social care to determine this;
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

7.9 Sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes ('Sexting')

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery' or the production of pseudo-images which are computer generated images that other side appear to be a photograph or video, you must report it to the DSL immediately. You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a student to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL);
- Delete the imagery or ask the student to delete it;
- Ask the student(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility);
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the student(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers;
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved;
- You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the student(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to the student(s);
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care;
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed);
- What further information is required to decide on the best response;
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown);

- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services;
- Any relevant facts about the students involved which would influence risk assessment;
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual;
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the students involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved).

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

- The incident involves an adult;
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs);
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent;
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any student in the images or videos is under 13;
- The DSL has reason to believe a student is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. They will hold interviews with the students involved (if appropriate). If at any point in the process there is a concern that a student has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the student at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contacting them via 101 or reporting it through the online referral system.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

Students are taught about the issues surrounding unsafe use of social media and implications for them and others. Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education.

- What it is;
- How it is most likely to be encountered;
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment;
- Issues of legality;
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.

Students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images;
- The receipt of such images.

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with students so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

7.10 Reporting systems for our students

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring students feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations. To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for students to confidently report abuse;
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for students;
- Make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

8. Online Safety and the Use of Mobile Technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors;
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities for the whole school community;
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate;

- Review the safeguarding and online safety policies and practise at least annually in line with guidance and advice.

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, disinformation (fake news), misinformation, conspiracy theories, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism;
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

- Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
 - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology;
 - Keeping personal information private;
 - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online;
 - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim;
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year;
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety;
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present;
 - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of students on their personal phones or cameras or any electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities;
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology;
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones;

- Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students phones or electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation;
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.

Full details of how the school supports students' parents and teachers with the issues around online safety can be found in our online safety policy.

8.1 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

Rednock School recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Rednock School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully students in line with this policy and our wider school policies that are linked with the document.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

9. Notifying Parents or Carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed;
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s).

10. Students with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities or Health Issues

We recognise that students with SEND certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- Students being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other students;
- The potential for students with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers, cognitive understanding and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

We offer extra pastoral support for these students. This includes:

- 1:1 emotional support;
- 1:1 keep safe work;
- Social skills groups and lunch clubs;
- Mentoring with staff and peers.

Any abuse involving students with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO.

11. Students with a Social Worker

Students may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a student has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the student's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks;
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

12. Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements;
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads;
- We have appointed a designated teacher, [Kerala Cole], who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance;
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role. As part of their role, the designated teacher will:
 - Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked after children are quickly and effectively responded to;
 - Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked after children, including discussing how student premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

13. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

The section of KCSIE 2024 on gender questioning children remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on gender or sexuality.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL or a member of their community team. When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

14. Complaints and Concerns about School Safeguarding Policies

14.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff.

14.2 Other complaints

The School's General Complaints Policy & Procedure will be followed for all other complaints.

14.3 Whistle-blowing

The school's process and policy related to whistle blowing can be located in the staff code of conduct.

15. Record-Keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained until the child is 25, or 31 in the case of children with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). There are some situations where records need a longer retention period, for example where they are relevant to legal proceedings which have been started but not finished or where children who have been 'looked after' by the local authority or adopted children. These records will be kept in line with statutory requirements and legislation.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main student file. To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **Five (5) days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term.

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

All paper records referring to safeguarding are kept in a locked filing cabinet in one of the DSLs offices. All electronic records are kept in student's specific files within the CP concern internal system within the school. A central list of students with safeguarding concerns is kept by the DSLs with access for the lead pastoral team to cross reference.

16. Training

16.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, exploitation or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning;
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners;
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment;
- Include information for staff to understand matters relating to online safety, their roles and responsibilities relating to this and an understanding of the filtering and monitoring processes within the school;
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all students.

Under Martyn's Law (Terrorism Protection of Premises Act 2025), schools have a legal duty to assess the risk of terrorism and implement proportionate protective measures to safeguard pupils, staff, and visitors. This includes conducting vulnerability assessments, updating emergency procedures (such as lockdown and evacuation plans), and ensuring staff receive terrorism awareness training. While most schools fall under the standard tier, the law encourages integration of these requirements into existing safeguarding frameworks, promoting preparedness without compromising the school's welcoming ethos.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable and be asked to read information about KCSIE and our Safeguarding at Rednock handout.

16.2 The DSL and Deputy DSLs

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

16.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge;
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

16.4 Recruitment – Interview Panels

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

17. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Kerala Cole. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

18. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints

- Health and Safety
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Attendance
- Mobile Phone Use
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Special Educational Needs and Disability policy
- First Aid
- Curriculum Overview
- Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children
- Privacy Notices