

Heartlands Community Trust Safeguarding Policy



<u>Date of Last Review</u>	November 2021	<u>Author</u>	Elen Roberts
<u>Date of next Review</u>	October 2022	<u>Owner</u>	Anthony Billings
<u>Type of Policy</u>	Statutory	<u>Owner</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Trust Board

To be read in conjunction with each school's Local Schools Safeguarding arrangement document

Safeguarding Policy:

INTRODUCTION:

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, exploitation and harm. Our trust is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance.

Our pupils' welfare is our paramount concern. The trustees will ensure that our schools will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and work together with agencies to ensure that our trust has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm.

Our trust is a community and all those directly connected, staff members, governors, parents, families and pupils, have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure for all.

This procedure document provides the basis for good practice within the schools for Safeguarding work. It should be read in conjunction with the Local School Safeguarding arrangements (LSSA) document available for each school.

1. OUR ETHOS:

The trust believe that this trust should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, spiritual and moral development of the individual child; enabling all children to thrive.

The trust recognise the importance of providing an environment within our schools that will help children feel safe and respected. The trust recognise the importance of enabling children to communicate openly where they are able and to feel confident that they will be listened to. The trust recognise that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children

The trust recognise that all adults within the trust, including permanent, supply staff, temporary staff, volunteers, parents and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

The trust will work with parents to build a solid understanding of the trust's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

2. SCOPE

In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years but in the case of SEN it is up to 25 years of age.

This policy applies to all members of staff in our trust, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers.

This policy applies to all learners in the trust. Each school will have Local School Safeguarding arrangements document covering the specifics of their school.

3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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. Section 157 of the same Act places a similar duty on non-maintained and independent schools, including free schools and academies.

Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, all maintained schools, further education colleges and independent schools, including free schools and academies, are required to cooperate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area.

Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the Local Safeguarding Children Board can require a school or further education institution to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.

This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance:

- 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 one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- 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 Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, July 2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2020

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

4. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental or 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. Appendix 1

explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children

Children include 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)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

5. EQUALITY STATEMENT

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, 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 give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities (see section 9)
- 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 at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The overall responsibility for the approval of this policy sits with the Board of Trustees. However, the day to day operational management and implementation of the policy and local school safeguarding arrangement document are the responsibility of the Head Teacher.

Safeguarding vigilance and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who works with children and their families must ensure their approach is child-centred and they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

It is recommended that each school must have their own locally owned safeguarding and child protection policy to reflect local procedures and protocols

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with overall designated responsibility for safeguarding is named in the LSSA for each school. Each school has a deputy designated safeguarding lead to ensure there is appropriate cover for this role at all times.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be on the school's leadership team and their role of Designated Safeguarding Lead will be **explicit in their job description**. This person should have the appropriate authority and be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and Safeguarding 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. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns. (KCSIE, 2020).

Each school will have a **nominated governor** in their LSSA responsible for safeguarding to champion good practice, to liaise with the head teacher and to provide information and reports to the governing body.

The **case manager for dealing with allegations** of abuse made against school staff members is the head teacher. The case manager for dealing with allegations against the head teacher is the chair of governors.

The **head teacher** of each of our schools will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.

The **governing body of each school** 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.

All staff members, governors, volunteers and external providers know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to pupils who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child. They are aware that behaviours and physical signs linked to behaviours that put children in danger.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This may include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender based violence/sexual assaults, harmful sexual behaviour and sexting. Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. Recent DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. It should be recognised that these issues are likely to occur, and so schools should have procedures in place to deal with them.

Groups at particular risk include girls, students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender+ (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any incidents of 'Upskirting'.

It is important that schools record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexualised behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own schools and make appropriate plans to reduce it.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges> (May 2018)

All concerns across the trust are reported on MyConcern an online reporting system monitored by the DSLs.

7. SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The trust 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 some sense of blame. Our schools may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in their lives.

The trust accept that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our schools will support all pupils by:

- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning; Through PSHE and other curriculum contexts, pupils are encouraged to talk about feelings and deal assertively with pressures, are listened to, and know to whom they can turn to for help and advice;
- providing pupils with a range of appropriate adults to approach if they are in difficulties; and ensuring that pupils are taught about safeguarding so that they 'recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it' (KCSIE 2020)
- supporting the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence and encourage the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying;
- ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety, enabling children and parents to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly; plus Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) requirements
- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children;
- ensuring that the curriculum will help children stay safe, recognise when they do not feel safe and identify who they might or can talk to and will support young people to become more resilient to inappropriate behaviours towards them, risk taking behaviours and behaviours that children may be coerced into including 'sexting' and 'Harmful Sexualised Behaviour';
- having a behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that each pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;

- ensuring repeated hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic or gender- or disability-based bullying, are considered under Safeguarding procedures and monitoring children who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns and providing appropriate support;
- acknowledging the importance of 'contextual safeguarding', which considers wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare. ([Working together to safeguard children July 2018](#) and KCSIE September 2020).
- liaising with a range of agencies that support the pupil such as Health Services, Wirral Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Services, Special Educational Support Services, Youth Services and the Educational Psychology Service.
- ensuring that, when a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan leaves, their information is transferred to the new school within two weeks and that the child's Social Worker is informed that the child has moved;
- For students with no additional need after 20 days absence if a child has moved and the new school is unknown the school will post details on the 'Pupil to Pupil' register. For those with EHCP students remain on role until the SEND team or Social care advise otherwise and we follow procedure as below
- alert the authority if it is aware of any child being looked after under a Private Fostering arrangement. On admission to school, and at other times, the school will be vigilant in identifying any private fostering arrangement. (See Appendix C)
- acknowledging that a child that is looked after (CLA) or has been previously looked after by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CLA and previously looked after children safe. It is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group;
- applying disciplinary measures such as restraint or isolation in response to incidents involving children with SEN and disabilities, by considering the risks carefully, given the additional vulnerability of the group;
- recognising that to safeguard a pupil, it may be necessary to use restraint and yet restraint is likely to impact on the well-being of the child. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, schools and colleges can reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use restraint. Guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

All schools will have local policies on physical intervention and/or positive touch. More local information about supporting students may be found in the LSSA

8. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE and the LSSA

All safeguarding procedures at school level are outlined in the LSSA which must contain:

- Clear outline key contacts at school and local level including: the DSL, named governors, local prevent lead, LADO and any other key safeguarding personal
- Local school context
- Aims of the LSSA
- Local roles and responsibilities including the authorship of the LSSA
- Recognising abuse and taking action including procedural charts and referral routes for DSLs
- SEND specific information
- Reference to mobile phone and camera usage
- Record keeping
- Training

It may also include other sections and links to resources such as pictures of DSL and key staff, training folders, school based support services or agencies in use. The LSSA should be accessible, useable and contextual.

The LSSA must be written to accompany this policy.

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.

We will use the NPCC- [When to call the police](#) to help designated safeguarding leads understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do.

9. DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE MADE BY A CHILD– ADVICE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF STAFF

If a child discloses information to you a staff member they are trained to:

Receive - Listen actively, open body language, accept, non-judgmental. Use TED (tell, explain, describe)

Reassure - 'You've done the right thing by coming to me', reassure child that you have listened and hear what they are saying; don't promise what can't be delivered

Respond - Tell what you are going to do and do it. Ensure child is ok before leaving

Report - As soon as possible, to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) in school

Record - Vital – facts, no opinions – When? Where? Who? What?

Review – Take responsibility to follow up any referral with a DSL

In addition:

- Record the disclosure on MyConcern as soon as possible after the disclosure
- If needed contact the DSL immediately to discuss

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

10. RECORD KEEPING

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions **must** be recorded on MyConcern

We will continue to support any pupil leaving our schools about whom there have been concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including Safeguarding and welfare concerns, is forwarded under confidential cover to the pupil's new school as a matter of priority.

Schools should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home in order to reduce the risk of not making contact with family members where welfare and/or safeguarding concerns are identified. (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020)

11. DISCUSSING CONCERNS WITH THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD

In general, DSLs (or a delegated member of staff) should always discuss any concerns the school may have with the child's parents. They need to know that you are worried about their child. However, you should not discuss your concerns if you believe that this would place the child at greater risk or lead to loss of evidence for a police investigation.

If you make a decision not to discuss your concerns with the child's parents or carers, this must be recorded on the chronology of the child's file on MyConcern with a full explanation for your decision.

It is important to record and consider the child's wishes and feelings, as part of planning what action to take in relation to concerns about their welfare. Capturing the lived experience of the child is paramount to ensure that actions remain child-centred (See Appendix C (Supporting Families Enhancing Futures - SFEF) model to capture the child's lived experience.

When talking to children, you should take account of their age, understanding and preferred language, which may not be English. It is also important to consider how a SEND child may need support in communicating.

How you talk to a child will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns. You may need to seek advice from the Integrated Front Door or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised.

If concerns have arisen as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.

It is expected that you discuss your concerns with the parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to the Integrated Front Door, unless you consider that this would place the child at increased risk of significant harm.

You do not need the parents' consent to make a referral if you consider the child is in need of protection, although parents will ultimately be made aware of which organisation made the referral. If parents refuse to give consent to a referral but you decide to continue, you need to make this clear to the Integrated Front Door (0151 606 2008).

If you decide to refer the child without the parents' consent, make sure to record this with a full explanation of your decision.

When you make your referral, you should agree with the Integrated Front Door what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when.

12. MAKING A REFERRAL - If a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect please report it to your local MASH team as outlined in your LSSA

In an emergency always call police on 999.

If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency call 101.

13. SAFER WORKFORCE AND MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Further guidance can be found in the Trust procedure entitled Allegations Against Professionals

All staff must always respond to allegations of abuse of a child made against members of the staff or adult. All staff must immediately and confidentially report concerns/allegations against teachers and other staff to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher must then report the concerns/allegation immediately to the Designated Officer (DO) for the Local Authority (previously known as LADO) for advice. The Head Teacher must inform the Trust HR immediately. The Head Teacher will then receive guidance from the Trust's external HR advisors or the central HR Team following the advice from the DO.

All staff must report concerns/allegations against the Head Teacher to the Trust named DSL, Deputy DSL or the HR Director. The Trust must then report the concerns/allegations immediately to the DO for advice. The Trust HR Director and DSLs will follow the advice from the DO.

Allegations made against staff include where a member of staff has 'behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children'. This is to take account of situations where a person's behaviour outside school may suggest 'transferable risk'. For example, where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children.

Whilst schools are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. KCSIE states: 'In no circumstances should a school or college decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (previously known as LADO) to determine a suitable outcome'.

If the reporting staff member does not feel the allegation has been appropriately acted upon, this must be challenged and concerns must be reported directly to the Trust HR Director and/or the Trust DSL and the DO directly in confidence.

The Trust is committed to creating a culture of safe working and recruitment practice and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. The Trust will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence, including verifying identity and right to work in UK, criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), barred list checks, prohibition checks, S128 Management check, overseas checks, verifying candidates physical and mental fitness to carry out their work responsibilities, qualifications checks, together with references and interview information.

A check of any prohibition can be carried out using the Teacher Services' system that may be found here: <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/> (January 2018)

Prohibition orders are described in the National College for Teaching and Leadership's (NCTL)

publication Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers. It can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-misconduct-the-prohibition-of-teachers--3>

The single central record must cover the following people: all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party and supply staff who work at the school. The Single Central Record is located..

The Trust must maintain the single central record (SCR) detailing checks carried out in each academy within the MAT. The single central record must cover the following people: all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party and supply staff who work at the school and members of trustees of the academy trust. The Single Central record is available at each school level by an authorised personnel and the Trust's central HR team.

The SCR is regularly monitored and checked for compliance.

All HCT recruitments documents, including job advert, job descriptions and person specifications includes a clear statement about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post holder.

Safer recruitment practices are adhered to and monitored regularly when appointing new staff, volunteers and authorising visitors.

The Trust provides safer recruitment training and support to school leaders to ensure adherence to safer recruitment practices and ensures at least one member of the recruitment panel is Safer Recruitment trained and has a valid certificate in place.

Staff are expected to adopt a high standard of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of colleagues, children and parents. There is an agreed staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the code of conduct) which is compliant with 'Safer Working Practices', and includes - acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media. Staff should be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviour in places other than work, including online.

For agency and third party supply staff, schools and colleges must also include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

14. STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The trust will ensure all new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given induction that includes basic safeguarding training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the safeguarding policy, staff code of conduct, Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, Part One, September 2020 and other related policies. There are mechanisms in place, such as safeguarding updates, to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff should also read, "[Working Together to Safeguard Children.](#)" July 2018

The induction will be proportionate to staff members' roles and responsibilities

All Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) will undergo updated Safeguarding training every two years. DSL's should undertake Prevent awareness training as well as specialist training required for the schools' context: see the LSSA

All staff members of the school will undergo face to face training (whole-school training) which is updated every year. **All governors and trustees must undergo governor specific awareness training at least every two years.** All staff in the trust will have access to The Key online safeguarding modules.

Staff members who miss the whole-school training will be required to undertake other relevant training to make up for it, e.g. by joining another school's whole-school training, booking onto whole-school training mop-up sessions.

The nominated governor for safeguarding will undergo training prior to or soon after appointment to the role; this training will be updated every three years.

We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding 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.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide briefings to the school on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews. These will occur annually or more frequently when necessary.

<https://www.wirral safeguarding.co.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>

The trust will maintain accurate records of staff induction and training on the single central record.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND INFORMATION SHARING

We recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential.

The head teacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only

All staff members must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep key information a secret or to themselves which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.

All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

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.

Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early

information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. 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. (KCSIE 2020)

16. INTER-AGENCY WORKING

We will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. For more information on agencies used at school level please read the LSSA

We will ensure that relevant staff members participate in multi-agency meetings and forums, including child protection conferences and core groups, to consider individual children.

We will participate in serious case reviews, other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits and embed recommendations into practice and compile required actions within agreed timescales.

17. CONTRACTORS, SERVICE AND ACTIVITY PROVIDERS AND WORK PLACEMENT PROVIDERS

Our schools will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures. We will require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use our procedure to report concerns.

Our schools will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding check in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, 2019*. If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our school premises may be refused.

When our schools commission services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.

18. WHISTLE-BLOWING AND COMPLAINTS

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within an organisation.

Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety. The trust recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff members fail to do so. The Trust Whistle Blowing policy is located in the shared drive, accessible to all staff. Professionals are expected to raise any concerns about a child using the whistle blowing procedure in the first instance.

[Whistleblowing Advice Line](#) is available for all workers on - 0808 800 5000- Email help@nspcc.org.uk

All HCT schools will ensure that all staff members are aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Safeguarding, 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).

Our schools will have a clear reporting procedure for children, parents and other people to report concerns or complaints, including abusive or poor practice.

Our schools will actively seek the views of children, parents and carers and staff members on our Safeguarding arrangements through surveys, questionnaires and other means.

19. SITE SECURITY

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are secure and for reporting concerns that may come to light.

Our schools will check the identity of all visitors and volunteers coming into school. Visitors are expected to sign in and out in the office visitors' log 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.

Our schools will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent 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 the person access to the school site.

20. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The trust will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.

The trust will complete an audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements at frequencies specified by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership and using the Section 175 online audit tool provided by them for this purpose.

The senior management of our school's and the governing body will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

21. POLICY REVIEW

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.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at each school will ensure that staff members, including volunteers and sessional workers are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures.