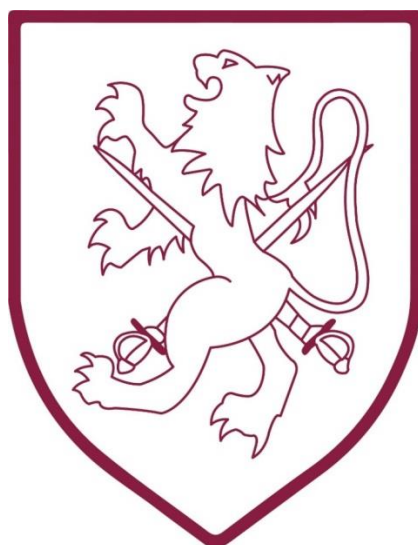




'To be the best I can be'

Walter Infant School and Nursery

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2025 2026

This policy has been adapted/adopted from the West Berkshire model child protection and safeguarding policy.

Head teacher	Sign Date:	&	 Mrs Judy Hargreaves 29/09/2025
Chair of Governing board	Sign Date:	&	

Review schedule (this policy will be reviewed annually)

Date	Description of any changes	Date approved by Governing board
15 th September 2022	This is a new policy adapted from West Berkshire after receiving an audit and training from Joan Ball; West Berkshire Safeguarding Officer	15 th September 2022
15 th August 2023	Dates updated. New Deputy Designated Leaders added	September 2023
10 th September 2024	Justin Lee added.	September 2024
29 th September	New Chair of Governors Jasmine Veale added as DDSL Dates changed KCSIE 2025	October 2025

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KEY CONTACTS

The key contacts for Safeguarding in this schools are:-

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Stephanie Bell	01189780825	Stephanie.Bell@walter.wokingham.sch.uk
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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Justin Lee	01189780825	Justin.Lee@walter.wokingham.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jasmine Veale	01189780825	Jasmine.Veale@walter.wokingham.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Zane Plescia	01189780825	zane.plescia@walter.wokingham.sch.uk

Key Contacts within the Local Authority

Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Procedures: <http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

Wokingham Children's Services	Shute End Wokingham RG40 1BN	0118908002 01344 351 999 - Out of hours emergencies	triage@wokingham.sch.uk
Prevent Officer Thames Valley Police	Channel helpline	020 7340 7264	Preventreferrals@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Shute End Wokingham RG40 1BN	0118 974 6141	LADO@wokingham.gov.uk
Chair of governors Gary Robinson	Walter Infant School and Nursery	01189780825	Gary.Robinson@walter.wokingham.sch.uk
Referral and Assessment Team – WBC Children's Social Care		0118 908 8002	Email: R&ATeam@wokingham.gov.uk

Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)	Wokingham Safeguarding Children Board Development Manager	www.wokinghamlscb.org.uk wscb@wokingham.gov.uk
ARC Information and Counselling Service	35 Reading Road Wokingham Berkshire RG41 1EG	http://www.arcweb.org.uk

PURPOSE

An effective whole-school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others to promote the Child's welfare. An effective policy also makes explicit our commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

This policy links with the Pan Berkshire child protection procedures which can be found by clicking on the following link <http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>.

1. INTRODUCTION

We take seriously our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in our care. "The welfare of the child is paramount". (Children Act 1989) Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: 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; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

- 1.2 Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on governing boards to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and Part 2 of [Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025](#) sets out the responsibilities of governing boards including the need to remedy without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses in regards to child protection arrangements that are brought to the attention of the school management or governing boards. (Links to all documents in Appendix 7)

- 1.3 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (appendix 7) sets out the arrangements that education services and schools must make to promote the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people. "All schools and further education institutions have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". Consequently, staff in these establishments play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect. This includes early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm, and by educating children about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum. All schools and further education institutions should create and maintain a safe environment for children and young people, and should be able to manage situations where there are child welfare concerns". Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and should be a child centred approach". ([Working Together, 2018](#)).

- 1.4 There are six main elements to this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy:

- 1.4.1 Ensuring The governing board have effective oversight of all Safeguarding procedures and practice within this establishment
- 1.4.2 Ensuring the practice of Safer Recruitment processes in line with national legislation, by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels,

and ensuring the completion of all necessary checks for staff, governors and volunteers.

1.4.3 Providing robust Safeguarding by following agreed procedures, and ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns. Also by raising the awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.

1.4.4 Ensuring the establishment of a whole school Safeguarding culture in which children can learn and develop, and staff feel confident to respectfully challenge actions that conflict with the code of conduct. This can be achieved by the creation of a positive school ethos, effective behaviour support, effective teaching and the pastoral support offered to pupils.

1.4.5 Recognising and supporting pupils who may have been abused by another child, including, bullying, sexual assault and harassment and exploitation.

Providing effective support to all those involved in the abuse and work towards a restorative outcome.

2.4.6 Ensuring effective whistleblowing and allegation management procedures.

1.5 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors to our establishment.

1.6 We recognise our responsibility for making contacts and referrals rather than making enquiries and investigating.

3. TERMINOLOGY

3.1 **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see [Working Together to Safeguard Children, A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children](#), 2018) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

3.2 **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as: 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; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 states that 'safeguarding children and protecting them from harm' is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.

3.3 **Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

3.4 **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

- 3.5 **Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- 3.6 **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.
- 3.7 **Extremism** refers to the Government's 'Prevent Strategy' which defines extremism as: "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism, calls for the death of members of our armed forces".
- 3.8 **Prevent** is part of the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy, preventing people from becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism. 'Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales: guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty of schools, colleges and other providers in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism', HM Government, 2015. The Prevent strategy identifies that young people are more likely to be vulnerable to violent extremist or terrorist narratives. Schools and colleges have a duty of care to their pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- 3.9 **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Radicalisation is the process where someone has their vulnerabilities or susceptibilities exploited towards crime or terrorism – most often by a third party, who have their own agenda, who have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.
- 3.10 **Sexting** is the exchange of self-generated sexually explicit images, through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet. Young people may also call it Cybersex or sending nudes.
- 3.11 **Child on Child** abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied /harmed or sexually assaulted or sexually harassed by another child under the age of 18.
- 3.12 **Safeguarding Outside the Home** is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

4. **SCHOOL POLICY**

- 4.1 At Walter Infant School and Nursery we recognise that for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse and extremism. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; therefore, everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. All members of our

staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children. All education settings and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. For our procedures to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children. ([Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018](#).) In order to fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities, all staff must make sure that their approach is child-centred and promotes the child's welfare and they should consider what is in the best interests of the child. Everyone who comes into contact with children of Walter Infant School and Nursery has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

5 GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The responsibility of the Governing Body at Walter Infant School and Nursery

- 5.1 Part 2 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) sets out the responsibilities of governing boards, proprietors and management committees. All Governing boards, proprietors and management committees must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and *comply with the law at all times, ensuring there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.*

- 5.2 Our Governing Body must ensure that our Walter Infant School and Nursery has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and at least one Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) from the Senior Leadership Team, who have been trained to the appropriate level and understand their responsibilities with respect to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the safeguarding of all learners. This training should take place every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate individuals to advise on Safeguarding concerns.

Our Governing Body should ensure all staff and other adults working within the setting are clear about the procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child. A full description of the duties of a DSL can be found in Annex C, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

The Governing Body must ensure that there is a job description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead that states all the duties and responsibilities undertaken by the DSL.

- 5.3 The Governing Body must ensure a designated teacher for children looked after by the local authority is appointed to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and ensure that this person has appropriate training. The most common reason for children to become looked after is as a result of neglect and/or abuse. Our Governing Body should ensure that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keeping looked after children safe.

In maintained schools and academies the Designated Teacher for Children looked after by the local authority should work with the Virtual School Head to discuss how funding (Pupil Premium plus additional funding is issued to Virtual School Heads) can

be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the schools and meet the needs in the child's personal education plan (PEP). In other schools and colleges an appropriately trained teacher should take the lead.

Our Governing Body should ensure that all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to safeguard children in the care of the local authority.

5.4 Our Governing Body should ensure there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This should include:

- An effective Child Protection & Safeguarding policy is in place and is approved by the Governing Body on an annual basis (and as and when other updates occur).
- A Staff Code of Conduct which should amongst other things include - acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media.
- At Walter Infant School and Nursery we will ensure that we adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, identify or reject people who might abuse children. Our Governing Body must act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence including: criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with references and interview information.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. These policies, along with Part One of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) and information regarding the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, should be provided to all staff on induction. Governing boards and proprietors should take a proportional risk based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff and volunteers.

5.5 The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should describe procedures which are in accordance with government guidance and refer to locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership, be updated annually (as a minimum), and be available publicly either via the school or college website or by other means.

5.6 The headteacher should ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by our Governing Body, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff.

5.7 Our Governing Body should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. The [Government Missing children and adult strategy](#) and the department's [Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for local authorities](#) guidance provides information that governing boards and proprietors might find useful when considering children who go missing from education.

5.8 Our Governing Body is responsible for ensuring there are statutory policies and procedures for safeguarding, safer recruitment, allegations management and whistleblowing in school. The named governor for safeguarding and whistleblowing will have oversight of how the policy and procedures are followed.

- 5.9 Our Governing Body should also ensure that their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and sets out how allegations of child on child abuse will be investigated and dealt with.
- 5.10 Our Governinig Body should appoint a Safeguarding Governor who should act as the link between the governing board and the setting in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding. Governors are responsible for ensuring that the Safeguarding Governor meets with the Designated Safeguarding Lead regularly (at least three times a year) in order to understand:
- How the relevant policies connected with Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment are being implemented.
 - To check the Single Central record is in order.
 - The challenges and issues that the school staff are managing in order to ensure that children are kept safe at all times.
 - How safer recruitment is being practiced and recorded.
 - To complete the annual section 175 Safeguarding Audit.
- 5.11 **Training**
- Our Governing Body should ensure, training undertaken by both staff and governors is in line with advice from the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership, and that Safer Recruitment and all required training is compliant and meets the required standards.
 - The expectation from the local authority and the Safeguarding Partnership is that the minimum requirement is for all staff and governors to receive universal safeguarding training and annual safeguarding updates. Best practice would be that all staff and governors complete universal classroom based training every three years, and the free online training recommended by the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership in the intervening years.
 - The Safeguarding Governor and other governors undertake relevant induction and refresher safeguarding and child protection training throughout their term of office as a governor.
 - At least one member of Our Governing Body is safer recruitment trained.
- 5.12 **Single Central Record**
- The Safeguarding Governor should ensure that all governors have completed DBS checks and section 128 checks which are recorded on the Single Central Record.
 - The Single Central Record details of staff and other volunteers is current, complete and compliant and feedback regularly to the full governing board.
- 5.13 **Governing Body Meetings**
Our Governing Body must ensure:
- Safeguarding and Child Protection is always an agenda item at governing board meetings
 - The Annual section 175 Safeguarding Audit has been completed and returns submitted to the local authority in a timely manner, and is reported upon at a relevant governing board meeting.
- 5.14 The Governors and leader of this establishment will therefore:
- Ensure there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead from the senior leadership team, and a Safeguarding Governor who have been trained to an appropriate level to fulfil their duties and responsibilities with

respect to the protection of children, and the training is refreshed every two years.

- Ensure that there are safeguarding policies and procedures in place and they are reviewed regularly to ensure children and learners are kept safe.
- Ensure that all staff have read and understood at least Part One, or the condensed version in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. The governing board have responsibility for ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities, and will decide which guidance is appropriate for staff roles. Governors will record their rationale for their decisions.
- Ensure that Staff with a Safeguarding responsibility also read Annex C of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

5.16 Our Governing Body, Safeguarding Team and Senior Leadership Team will ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty

5.17 Our Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. Staff will respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable and they seek to understand the triggers for children's behaviour. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

5.18 Our Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will ensure all staff are able to identify children who may benefit from early help and the early help process and their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an Early Help assessment. In relation to Early Years, staff should demonstrate the young children's understanding of 'how to keep themselves safe from relevant risks' and demonstrate how this is monitored across the provision.

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT

6.1 [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) (Part three), sets out clear guidance which is adhered to at this school. The safer recruitment policy also contains detailed information about recruitment and selection procedures for staff and volunteers.

6.2 The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the school's measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to identify, deter or reject people who might pose a risk of harm to children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

6.3 The level of DBS certificate required, and whether a prohibition check is required, will depend on the role and duties an applicant is employed/volunteers to do in a school or college.

6.4 For most, an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, will be required as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. Please refer to

Part three, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) or further details relating to regulated activity.

6.5 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Four types of DBS checks are referred to in this guidance.

Basic DBS check – This provides details of convictions and conditional cautions considered to be “unspent” under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Standard - This provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC), regardless or not of whether they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The law allows for certain old and minor matters to be filtered out;

Enhanced - This provides the same information as a standard check, plus any additional information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed; and

Enhanced with barred list check - where people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children, this allows for an additional checks to be made as to whether the person appears on the children’s barred list.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate.

- 6.6 All staff working within the school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability to work with children, including verification of their identity and qualifications, satisfactory references, a satisfactory barred list check, an enhanced DBS check, a right to work in the UK check and additional overseas checks for those who have lived or worked abroad is also completed. For teachers an additional check has been carried out to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching. In addition, governors in maintained schools will now have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS and it will be the responsibility of the school to apply for the certificate if a governor does not have one (Governors who also undertake regulated activity must have an Enhanced DBS with barred list check). For those engaged in management roles (in independent schools – including academies and free schools) an additional check will be carried out to ensure they are not prohibited under section 128 provisions. A check of any prohibition orders will be carried out using the Teacher Services System to see if there is a prohibition order which would prevent a person from carrying out teacher work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children’s homes in.

Once the DBS checks are complete, the DBS will send a certificate (the DBS certificate) to the applicant. The applicant must show the original DBS certificate to their potential employer before they take up post or as soon as practicable afterwards.

At least one member of every recruitment and selection panel will have completed safer recruitment training.

- 6.7 A Single Central Record of employment checks must be held by schools and colleges and checked termly by the Safeguarding Governor. The Single Central Record must cover the following people:
- All staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school: in colleges, this means those providing education to children
 - All others who work in regular contact with children in the school or college, including volunteers, contractors and agency staff
 - For independent schools, including academies and free schools, all members of the proprietor body.
- 6.8 The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:
- An identity check
 - A barred list check
 - An enhanced DBS check/certificate
 - A prohibition from teaching check
 - Further checks on people living or working outside the UK
 - A check of professional qualifications, and
 - A check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 6.9 Schools must not make recommendations for private tutors. If asked they should direct parents/carers to the guidance in **Appendix 8**

6.10 **Pre-appointment checks**

6.10.1 All new appointments

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, must be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, schools and colleges must:

- verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website;
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate(including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity);
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, should follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate, including EEA teacher sanctions and restrictions;
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate;

- for teaching staff; carry out a Teacher Services system check to ascertain award of QTS, completion of teacher induction, and whether the person has any prohibitions, sanctions or restrictions issued by the secretary of state;
- seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, before interview, so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview;
- for independent schools, including academies and free schools, check that a person taking up a management position (Governor) is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State.

- 6.10.2 Where an enhanced DBS certificate is required, it must be obtained from the candidate before, or as soon as practicable after, the person's appointment.

There is no requirement to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate or carry out checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, in the three months prior to their appointment, the applicant has worked:

- in a school in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children or young persons in any post in a school since 12 May 2006; or
- in an institution within the further education sector in England or in a 16-19 Academy, in a post which involved the provision of education which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons.

- 6.10.3 All other pre-appointment checks must still be completed, including, where the individual is engaging in regulated activity, a barred list check. Schools or colleges may also choose to request an enhanced DBS certificate should they wish to do so.

- 6.10.4 The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any person, including volunteers, who are not in or seeking to enter in regulated activity.

- 6.10.5 For supply staff, contractors and fee funded teacher trainees, schools should also include whether written confirmation was received that the provider supplying the member of staff/teacher trainee has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, including the appropriate level of DBS check. Where a contractor is self-employed the school should obtain an appropriate level of DBS check on their behalf. For more information on the appropriate level of DBS check for contractors see sections 285-294 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

- 6.10.6 Where checks are carried out on volunteers, schools should record this on the Single Central Record.

- 6.10.7 If our Governing Body, Safeguarding Team or Senior Leadership Team become aware of concern about an existing staff member's suitability to work with children or learners, it should carry out all relevant checks as if the person were a new member of staff. Similarly, if a person working at the school or college moves from a post that was not regulated activity into

work that is regulated activity, the relevant checks for the regulated activity must be carried out. Apart from these circumstances, in respect of existing staff the school or college is not required to request a DBS check or barred list check. **If a school or college knows or has reason to believe, that an individual is barred, it commits an offence if it allows the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.**

- 6.10.8 While registered early years providers are not required to keep a Single Central Record, they are still required to obtain the relevant information to confirm suitability of those caring for children. The requirements are set out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

7. TEACHER PROHIBITION ORDERS

- 7.1 Teacher prohibition orders, and Interim prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting. Advice about how to refer allegations of misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) for consideration can be obtained from the

Teacher misconduct section of the GOV.UK website.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teacher-misconduct-referring-a-case>

- 7.2 Teacher prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by TRA. Pending such consideration, the Secretary of State may issue an interim prohibition order if it is considered to be in the public interest to do so. The TRA's role in making prohibition orders and the process used to impose them are described in more detail in its publication [Teacher Misconduct: the prohibition of teachers](#).

7.3 Section 128 direction

A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. A person who is prohibited, is unable to participate in any management of an independent school such as: a management position in an independent school, academy or free school as an employee; a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body for an independent school; or a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities.

A section 128 direction disqualifies a person from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school. A check for a section 128 direction can be carried out using the [Teacher status checks information for employers](#). Where the person will be engaging in regulated activity, a DBS barred list check will also identify any section 128 direction.

- 7.4 The governing board and proprietors will ensure the practice of safer recruitment processes in line with national legislation.

8. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Protecting children by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns, raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.

- 8.1 The Senior Leadership Team and DSL/DDSLs will ensure all staff members are aware of the systems within Walter Infant School and Nursery which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of their induction. We use CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System). Induction must include an introduction to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputies, and staff must be made aware of the behaviour policy and the school's safeguarding response to children who go missing. We will ensure all staff understand the risks posed by adults or learners who use technology, including the internet, to bully, groom, radicalise or abuse children. They have well-developed strategies in place to keep children safe and to support them to develop their own understanding of these risks and in learning how to keep themselves and others safe.
- 8.2 The DSL will ensure a record of referral is retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child from further harm. Parents or Carers must be made aware of concerns and their consent sought in accordance with local procedures, unless doing so would increase the risk of or actual harm to a child. If in doubt, contact Wokingham Children's Services on 01189088002 for consultation and advice.
- 8.4 The DSL will ensure there is a written plan in place that has clear and agreed procedures to protect a child. For children who are the subject of a child in need plan, child protection plan or who are in the care of the local authority, the plan will identify the help that the child should receive and the actions to be taken. All staff should have an awareness of issues around safeguarding children in the care of the local authority as the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Our Governing Body should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge necessary to keep children in the care of the local authority safe.
- 8.5 The DSL will ensure children who go missing from the setting they attend receive well-coordinated responses that reduce the harm or risk of harm to them, that associated risks are well understood and their impact is minimised, and that staff are aware of, and implement in full, local procedures for children who are missing from home and/or from education.
- 8.6 The DSL and Senior Leadership Team will ensure local procedures for notifying the local authority and parents are available, understood and followed. That comprehensive records are held and shared between the relevant agencies to help and protect children. In relation to early years settings, providers are aware of and implement the requirements of the '[Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)' when children go missing while in the care of the provider. (Refer to Appendix 3 for further information).
- 8.7 The DSL and Senior Leadership Team will ensure appropriate action is taken when children stop attending the setting. For schools, this includes informing the local authority when a pupil is going to be deleted from the register outside standard transition points.

- 8.8 The DSL and Senior Leadership Team will ensure all staff and carers have a copy of and understand the written procedures for managing allegations of harm to a child.

9. CREATING AND MAINTAINING A SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

At Walter Infant School and Nursery we have an environment where pupils feel safe and secure; this is vital to ensure pupil the best outcomes.

- 9.1 Walter Infant School and Nursery strives to ensure staff feel confident to promote best practice at all times and challenge any practices that do not meet the standards expected of staff and volunteers, or contravenes the staff code of conduct.
- 9.2 All adults working with, or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. There are, however, key people within schools and the local authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those carrying out these responsibilities for the current year are listed in section 1 of this document.
- 9.3 All staff will ensure positive behaviour is promoted consistently. Staff will only use de-escalation techniques that are agreed as part of the behaviour policy. Reasonable force, including restraint, should be discouraged and only used in strict accordance with the legislative framework to protect the child and those around them, and in line with the school/college physical intervention policy. All incidents will be reviewed, recorded and monitored and the views of the child sought and understood.

9.4 **Training and Support**

The Head teacher and all other staff who work with children will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively.

The expectation from the local authority and the Safeguarding Partnership is that the minimum requirement that all staff and Governors should receive is face to face universal safeguarding training every three years, and regular safeguarding updates. The free online training recommended by the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership can be used as an annual Safeguarding update.

Our Governing Body should ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training, and online safety, at induction. The training should be regularly updated.

Induction and training should be in line with advice from the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership and government guidance. In addition, all staff members should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (e.g. via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguarding children effectively.

This will also include Prevent training, to ensure that staff have the necessary training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism. This includes agency and temporary staff.

- 9.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all staff complete universal safeguarding training face to face and that this is refreshed either every three years or in line with guidance from the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership or statutory guidance.

Staff training records will be kept up to date to monitor this. All staff, students, supply staff and regular visitors to the school will be told where the policy is kept, given the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and informed of the school's procedures in reporting concerns.

- 9.7 All members of staff have a responsibility and be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so they can identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff must be aware of the main categories of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. In addition, all staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. Staff should be aware that behaviour linked to the likes of drug talking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger. All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

10. **PUPILS AT RISK**

- 10.1 We recognise the importance of identifying vulnerable pupils that may be at risk of abuse (Categories of Abuse – see Appendix 2), or children that may have additional

support needs. We recognise that a pupil may be classed as vulnerable for a variety of reasons and this may not be permanent.

10.2 We recognise the following as vulnerable groups (although not exclusively):

- Children with Special Educational Needs
- Children with emotional/behavioural/attachment disorders
- Children known to the Youth Offending Team (YOT team)
- Children attending Alternative Education Provision (AP).
- Children with caring responsibilities or classified as a young carer
- Looked after children and those subject to private fostering arrangements
- Children missing education/low attendance
- Children dealing with issues around domestic abuse
- Children from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities
- Children experiencing bereavement
- Children in receipt of FSM or PPG
- Children at risk from neglect; physical; sexual and emotional abuse
- Disabled children
- Children at risk of exclusion
- Children at risk from bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Children at risk of child on child abuse
- Children at risk from the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting
- Girls at risk of female genital mutilation
- Children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and radicalisation
- Children at risk of exploitation, sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Children at risk of honour based violence or forced marriage
- Children affected by substance misuse (drugs, alcohol)
- Children affected by mental health issues
- Children affected by faith abuse
- Children affected by gender based violence or violence against women and girls
- Children affected by fabricated or induced illness
- Children affected by issues around bullying
- Children affected by crime
- Children affected by cybercrime
- Children affected by gang activity
- Children affected by gender reassignment lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) abuse.
- Children from BAME communities.

10.3 Leaders and staff will recognise vulnerable pupils and support them through:

- 10.3.1 The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- 10.3.2 The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- 10.3.3 The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies.
- 10.3.4 A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are still valued.

- 10.3.5 Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that supports the pupils and their families.
 - 10.3.6 A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
 - 10.3.7 The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
 - 10.3.8 Recognition that statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse, so staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems, will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
 - 10.3.9 Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and/or protection.
-
- 10.4 The school will support pupils from families at risk of domestic abuse by signing up to [Operation Encompass](#) with Thames Valley Police, to be informed of domestic incidents within the child's home.
 - 10.5 The school recognises it may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of vulnerable children and that whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
 - 10.6 Recognising the vulnerability of part time pupils, the school will inform the local authority if they put pupils on a part-time timetable including where they have agreed flexi schooling.
 - 10.7 staff will ensure that wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents/carers and colleagues from partner agencies.
 - 10.8 Leaders will ensure that safeguarding the child is of paramount importance when considering a request for flexi schooling and that any concerns are raised with the CAAS team.
 - 10.9 Leaders will ensure that the school contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018). Schools and colleges should work with social care, CAAS, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to interagency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. All schools and colleges should allow access for children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or consider whether to conduct, a section 17 assessment or a section 47 enquiry (Children's Act 1989). As part of meeting a child's needs it is important for governing boards and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies. Data protection fears should not be a barrier to information sharing as the safety of the child is paramount. Although inter agency working and information sharing are vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, it is clear they are especially important to identify and prevent child sexual exploitation.

- 10.10 Leaders will ensure all staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

11. RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

- 11.1 Walter Infant School and Nursery values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.
- 11.2 Walter Infant School and Nursery seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and is expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.
- 11.3 Staff will be made aware at safeguarding training of the characteristics within children and families that may indicate radicalisation or warning indicators of those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
- 11.4 Staff will treat any radicalisation/extremism concerns in the same manner as safeguarding concerns and will follow the schools child protection and safeguarding procedures as outlined in 7.2. (Further information on the 'Prevent Duty' and schools responsibilities, including the Referral Pathway can be found in Appendix 3).

12. Online safety/e-safety and the use of mobile technology

Walter Infant School and Nursery believes that the use of information and communication technologies brings great benefits. We recognise that there are e-safety issues that need to be planned for that will help to ensure appropriate, effective and safer use of electronic communications. All members of staff are trained in/receive regular updates in e-safety and recognising and reporting concerns.

We have a bespoke Online Safety Programme: ROBOT which has been written in house to meet the needs of our very young children. We have a code of conduct for online learning, which has been shared with all our families so that they understand our expectations. We regularly update parents of risks via our Friday Flyer.



e-safety for 4 to 7 year olds

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 pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community via our Online/E-Safety Policy which is on our website, it states:

Mobile phones and personal handheld devices

- Pupils will not be allowed to bring mobile phones to school unless prior arrangements are made with the school.
- Where mobile phones are allowed in school they may not be used during lessons or formal school time. The sending of abusive or inappropriate text messages or images is forbidden.
- Pupils will not be allowed to bring in games devices, particularly those which allow ad hoc networks to be established.
- Teacher/parent contact should normally be by the main school telephone and not via a mobile device except where off-site activities dictate the use of a mobile phone.
- Parent helpers in school and staff must ensure that they do not send personal messages, either audio or text, during contact time with pupils. If an exceptional emergency arises they should arrange temporary cover whilst they make a call.
-

Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

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, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, 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 pupils 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 pupils on their personal phones or cameras

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 pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

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

Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy.

13. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES FOR STAFF AND CODE OF CONDUCT

13.1 Code of Conduct

All staff must behave responsibly and professionally in all dealings with children and specifically with students for whom they have a duty of care. All staff must follow the procedures set out in our staff Code of Conduct. Staff should always avoid behaviour which might be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others. As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children are in positions of trust in relation to the children in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a student cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children and young people

and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification

- 13.2 Each new member of staff and volunteer will be provided with a full induction on Safeguarding, in addition to the training requirements set out in section 10. A copy of 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People' will be available for all staff and volunteers to read. All staff are required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2022, if working directly with children, or Appendix A if assessed as appropriate.
- 13.3 Staff members and volunteers are required to sign up to, and follow the school's Code of Conduct. This is a separate policy and should be considered alongside this policy. (Please use the following link for further information, [Model Code of Conduct for Schools](#)).
- 13.4 The Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers is made freely available to staff, visitors, contractors, pupils, parents and carers on the school website and in hard copy, at request. This allows everyone to understand our expectations of our staff and to be able to identify any behaviour that may be inappropriate. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 states that schools must have a **Staff Code of Conduct**.
- 13.5 Use of social networking sites by staff is managed in a separate policy and should be viewed in connection with the school Code of Conduct and this policy.
- All school staff are in a position of trust, and there are expectations that they will act in a professional manner at all times.
- 13.6 The usage of all electronic provisions, including online storage set up by this establishment are monitored. All access rights are terminated upon the cessation of relevant employment contract.

14. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

- 14.1 This policy is in line with guidance from the following legislation and statutory guidance;
- The Children Act 1989 & Section 11 of the Children Act 2004
 - The Education Act 2002 (Section 175)
 - The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
 - Dealing with Allegation of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (2011)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2023)
 - Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings, 2016, Ofsted
 - Berkshire Child Protection Procedures
http://berks.proceduresonline.com/west_berk/index.html
 - What To Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused
 - Prevent Within Schools, a toolkit for schools May 2015
 - [The Education Inspection Framework](#)

Copies of the above can be accessed (please state where they can be accessed in this school). They can also be accessed from West Berkshire's Education Portal on

the 'Safeguarding in Schools' page: www.westberkseducation.co.uk. Independent schools should also be familiar with the content of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014.

15. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

- 15.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. It forms part of the Universal Safeguarding Training mentioned in section 10. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret. Where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by the appropriate authorities. Children can be reassured that only the people who "need to know" will be informed, that this will be the minimum necessary and that information will not become common knowledge.
- 15.2 Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Where information is shared with appropriate staff, they must maintain the confidentiality outlined in 10.1.

16. CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

- 16.1 The school recognises that children may abuse other children. All staff should be clear our policy and procedure with regard to Child on Child abuse. This may include but would not be limited to:
- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
 - Physical abuse such as hitting, shaking, kicking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
 - Sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault.
 - Sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, online sexual harassment, which may be stand alone or part of a wider pattern of abuse.(Part Five of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images or videos.
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or engage with sexual activity with a third party.
 - Up-skirting which involves taking a picture under a person's clothes without their consent with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to gain sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
 - Up-skirting is a criminal offence under The Voyeurism Act(2019)
 - Initiation or hazing type violence and rituals.
- 16.2 All reports of child on child abuse will be taken seriously and acted upon in line with the behaviour policy. Support will be given to all parties including those pupils accused of abusing another child.
- 16.3 All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

- 16.4 It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between pupils, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature.

Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children, and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

16.5 **Serious Violence**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in serious crime and understand the measures in place to manage these. Additional information is available in Appendix 7

- 16.6 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are the policy for the teaching of PSHE, the policy for the management of pupils’ behaviour including our policy on physical intervention and our policy on anti-bullying and our health and safety policy.

- 16.7 The Department for Education (DfE) has announced a helpline to support potential victims of sexual harassment and abuse in education settings.

Dedicated NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663. This helpline will also provide support to parents and professionals. Run by the NSPCC, the helpline provides children and adults who are victims of sexual abuse in schools with support and advice including how to contact the police and report crimes.

All staff should be clear as to the school’s or college’s policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

For further information about sexual violence and sexual harassment see [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) Part Five

All staff should be clear as to our policy and procedures with regards to Child on Child abuse, and the dedicated NSPCC helpline a helpline to support victims of sexual harassment and abuse in education settings - 0800136663.

Advice for school staff regarding cyber bullying and online abuse can be found here. [Cyber Bullying Advice for Head teachers and School Staff](#)

17. **WHISTLEBLOWING**

- 17.1 Our Governing Body and school leaders will ensure that all staff know how to make a complaint and understand policies on whistleblowing (set out in Part 4 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#))

- 17.2 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

- 17.3 All staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues, and are regularly reminded of this. Staff are aware how to raise concerns

and who to share these with. This is detailed in our Whistleblowing Policy which should be viewed alongside this policy.

- 17.4 Whistleblowing concerns about the Head teacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors.
- 17.5 In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head teacher, where the Head teacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the Designated Officer at the local authority via CAAS. Staff should consider discussing any concerns with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and make any referrals via them.
- 17.6 Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feel their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them.
- 17.7 The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. **Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.**

18. ALLEGATIONS

- 18.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.
- 18.2 Governing boards and proprietors should ensure there are procedures in place to handle allegations against teachers, Head teachers, principals, volunteers and other staff.
- 18.3 The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is set out in the Pan Berkshire Child Protection Procedures. A copy of which is available on the desktop of all staff computers and by following this link: [Berks CP Procedures online](#). Further guidance can be found in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- 18.4 The Head teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or another Senior Manager should, in the first instance, contact Wokingham Children's Services in order to liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to hold an Allegation against Staff/Volunteer Meeting (ASV). Where the allegation is against the Head teacher, the Chair of Governors will take this action.
- 18.5 If, for any reason, it is decided that an Allegations Against Staff and Volunteer Meeting is not appropriate, it may be necessary to address matters in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures in liaison with the school's HR Advisor.
- 18.6 Staff and volunteers, as part of their induction, are provided with a guide for staff faced with an allegation of abuse.
- 18.7 Our Governing Body should ensure that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in a regulated activity

has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned. **This is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.**

- 18.8 Governing boards and proprietors should also ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.

19. LOW LEVEL CONCERN POLICY

19.1 Introduction

The safety and wellbeing of children in Walter Infant School and Nursery is dependent on the vigilance of all our staff and their prompt communication to the DSL or Head teacher of any concerns, no matter how small, about any conduct by an adult which causes you to doubt that adult's suitability to work with or have access to children. All references in this section to "adult" should be interpreted as meaning any adult working in the school who provides education for children under 18 years, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.

The notification and prompt and appropriate handling of all concerns about adults is fundamental to safeguarding children. It helps to identify and prevent abuse and to protect adults against misunderstandings or misinterpretations. It also encourages openness, trust and transparency and it clarifies expected behaviours. Those raising concerns or reporting allegations in good faith will always be supported, and adults in respect of whom concerns or allegations have been raised will not suffer any detriment unless the concern or allegation is found to be substantiated.

This policy, if correctly implemented, should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of our school.

19.2 Code of Conduct

All staff must behave responsibly and professionally in all dealings with children and specifically with students for whom they have a duty of care. All staff must follow the procedures set out in our staff Code of Conduct policy. Staff should always avoid behaviour which might be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others. As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children are in positions of trust in relation to the children in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a student cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children and young people and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

19.3 Our Low-Level Concern Procedures

The overarching aim of the school's Low-Level Concern Procedures is to facilitate a culture in which the values and expected behaviours which are set out in our Code of Conduct are lived, constantly monitored, and reinforced by all staff. In particular, the intention of this policy is to:

- maintain a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which staff are confident and clear about behaviours expected of them and their colleagues, the delineation of boundaries and reporting lines;

- ensure staff feel empowered to raise any low-level concern, whether about their own or a colleague's behaviour, where that behaviour might be construed as falling short of the standards set out in our Code of Conduct; and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; and
- provide for responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised – maintaining on the one hand confidence that concerns when raised will be handled promptly and effectively whilst, on the other hand, protecting staff from false allegations or misunderstandings.

19.4 **What is a Low-Level Concern?**

A low-level concern for this purpose is any concern, no matter how small and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt', that an adult may have acted in a manner inconsistent with the school's Code of Conduct or simply – even if not linked to a particular act or omission – a sense of unease as to the adult's behaviour particularly towards or around children. Low-level concerns include where an adult may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO (see section 21)

19.5 **Low-Level Concerns about self (self-reporting)**

From time to time an individual may find him/herself in a situation which might appear compromising to others or which could be misconstrued. Equally, an individual may for whatever reason have behaved in a manner which on reflection s/he considers falls below the standard set out in the Code of Conduct.

Self-reporting in these circumstances is encouraged as it demonstrates both awareness of the expected behavioural standards and self-awareness as to the individual's own actions or how they could be perceived. As such, the school sees self-reporting of low-level concerns as an important means of maintaining a culture where everyone aspires to the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.

19.6 **Low-Level Concerns about another adult**

From time to time an individual may notice behaviour or actions in other adults which leave them concerned. These are behaviour or actions which fall short of a formal allegation of abuse. These tend to be behaviours which indicate that our Code of Conduct has not been met. Any such concerns can be dealt with as a low-level concern.

19.7 **What should I do if I have one?**

Where a low-level concern exists it should be reported to the DSL or to the Head teacher as soon as reasonably possible and, in any event, within 24 hours of becoming aware of it (where the concern relates to a particular incident).

19.8 **How will my low-level concern be handled?**

The DSL will discuss all low level concerns s/he receives with the Head teacher as soon as possible and in any event within 24 hours of becoming aware of it. The Head teacher will, in the first instance, satisfy him/herself that it is a low-level concern and should not be reclassified as an allegation and dealt with under the appropriate

procedure. The circumstances in which a low-level concern might be reclassified as an allegation are where:

- the threshold is met for an allegation;
- there is a pattern of low-level concerns which collectively amount to an allegation; or
- there is other information which when taken into account leads to an allegation

Where the Head teacher is in any doubt whatsoever, advice will be sought from the LADO.

Having established that the concern is low-level, the DSL or Head teacher as appropriate will discuss it with the individual who has raised it and will take any other steps to investigate it as necessary. Most low-level concerns by their very nature are likely to be minor and will be dealt with by means of management guidance, training etc.

20. What records will be kept?

Where a low-level concern has been communicated, a confidential record will be kept in a central record which logs all low-level concerns (see Appendix 9 for an example low-level concern reporting form). This is necessary to enable any patterns of concerning behaviour to be identified. However, no record will be made of the concern on the individual's personnel file (and no mention made in job references) unless either:

- the concern (or group of concerns) has been reclassified as an allegation as above; or
- the concern (or group of concerns) is sufficiently serious to result in formal action under the school's grievance, capability or disciplinary procedure

21. APPOINTMENT OF DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER.

Governing Bodies of maintained schools must appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and to ensure that this person has appropriate training. At Walter Infant and Nursery it will be the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

22. CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

22.1 The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing Bodies of maintained schools should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked after children safe.

22.2 In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after the child.

23. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Governing Bodies should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with special educational needs and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

24. INSPECTIONS

- 24.1 From September 2019 all inspections by Ofsted will be made using [Education Inspection Framework \(EIF\)](#)
- 24.2 Ofsted Inspectors will be looking for evidence that 'the provider has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to identify learners who may be at risk; which responds in a timely way; and that staff recruitment is managed and any allegations are dealt with appropriately'.
- 24.3 The Head teacher will respond in a timely way to investigations by the Local Authority following a Safeguarding referral to Ofsted
- 24.4 Individual inspectorates will also report on safeguarding arrangements and have published frameworks which inform how they inspect the independent schools that are not inspected by Ofsted at [School Inspection Service](#) and Independent Schools Inspectorate. [isi.net](#).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Please be aware that this guidance is provided as a useful reminder of the indicators of abuse. It should always be considered within the context of a comprehensive training programme and not as a substitute for more in depth consideration.

There are four main categories of abuse, which may result in a child having a Child Protection Plan. They are:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve:

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, bruising, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise; causing physical harm to a child
- Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, e.g. witnessing domestic violence or the exploitation or corruption of children.

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

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities including prostitution, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or no penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Children under 16 years of age cannot lawfully consent to any sexual activity occurring, although in practice young people may be involved in sexual contact to which, as individuals, they may have agreed.

Neglect

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

- Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.
- Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
 - Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
 - Meet or respond to basic emotional needs
 - Ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care givers
 - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
 - It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

APPENDIX 2 - RECOGNISING ABUSE & NEGLECT

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of possible significant harm
- Justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated/named/lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and/or referral to Children's Social Care/CAAS.

Generally, in an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s or other household members e.g. siblings or others outside of the home
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (although full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into or have contact with the household.

Indicators of Physical Abuse

This section provides information about the sites and characteristics of physical injuries which may be observed in abused children. It is intended primarily to assist non-medical staff in the recognition of bruises, burns and bites which should be referred to CAAS and / or require medical assessment.

Some of these indicators would clearly suggest child abuse, whilst others, when combined, may suggest that a child is being abused:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained injuries including bruises, burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbably excuses given to explain injuries
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- Parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a 'cry for help' and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury) or may represent fabricated or induced illness
- Repeated use of different doctors, A&E departments and other forms of direct health provision
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Bald patches
- Bruising, biting, burns, scalds, scars
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Self-harming

- Arms and legs covered, even in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Running away.

Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. Manifestations of emotional abuse may also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse
- The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse. Recognition of emotional abuse is usually based on observations over time and the following offers some associated indicators.

Parent / carer & child relationship factors

- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, insecure or avoidant, indiscriminate or no attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Conveying to children they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person e.g. persistent negative comments about the child or 'scape-goating' within the family
- Developmentally inappropriate or inconsistent expectations of the child which is outside what is considered reasonable and acceptable cultural/legal norms e.g. over-protection, limited exploration and learning, interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, prevention of normal social interaction
- Causing children to feel frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic violence, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

Child presentation concerns

- Behavioural problems e.g. aggression, attention seeking, hyperactivity, poor attention
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem, lack of confidence, fearful, distressed, anxious
- Poor peer relationships including withdrawn or isolated behaviour.

Parent/carer related issues

- Dysfunctional family relationships including domestic violence
- Parental problems that may lead to lack of awareness of child's needs e.g. mental illness, substance misuse, learning difficulties
- Parent or carer emotionally or psychologically distant from child.

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently too scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. The child may fear s/he will not be believed and/or fear repercussions due to possible threats that may have been made
- This form of abuse is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of cultural sensitivities of individual child / family
- Recognition of sexual abuse can be difficult, unless the child tells others of the abuse, their account is believed and the suspected abuse referred to Children's Social Care

and/or the police. There may be no physical signs and indications of sexual abuse are most likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Behavioural indicators

Behavioural indicators of sexual abuse may include:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)
- Running away.

Physical indicators

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Vaginal soreness or bleeding
- Pregnancy.

Indicators of Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting e.g. neglect of the child's physical needs possibly causing non-organic failure to thrive; neglect of the child's developmental emotional needs which may contribute to cognitive delay; neglect of the child's emotional needs resulting in behavioural markers.

Child related indicators

- Non-organic failure to thrive/faltering growth
- Delay in achieving developmental, cognitive and /or other educational milestones
- A child who is unkempt or inadequately clothed or dirty or smells
- A child who is perceived to be frequently hungry, scavenging
- Behavioural signs may include a child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause, anxious attachment, aggression, indiscriminate friendliness
- Failure of child to grow or develop within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss or speech language delay
- Recurrent /untreated infections or skin conditions e.g. severe nappy rash, eczema or persistent head lice/scabies
- Unmanaged /untreated health/medical conditions including poor dental health
- Frequent accidents or injuries
- Child frequently absent or late at school
- Sudden changes in behaviour or in school performance
- Poor self esteem
- Child thrives away from home environment.

Indicators in the care provided

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene
- Failure by parents or carers to meet the child's health and medical needs e.g. poor dental health; failure to attend or keep appointments with health visitor, GP or hospital; lack of GP registration; failure to seek or comply with appropriate medical treatment; failure to address parental substance misuse during pregnancy
- A dangerous or hazardous home environment including failure to use home safety equipment; risk from animals
- Poor state of home environment e.g. unhygienic facilities, lack of appropriate sleeping arrangements, inadequate ventilation (including passive smoking) and lack of adequate heating
- Lack of opportunities for child to play and learn
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods.

APPENDIX 3 - FURTHER INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING TOPICS

Children Missing Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools and colleges should put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

Schools

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers.

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register where the pupil:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor
- his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The local authority must be notified when a school is to remove a pupil from its register for any of the six grounds above. This should be done as soon as these grounds for removal from the register are met, and in any event no later than removing the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education and follow up with any

child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Child Criminal Exploitation, Serious violence; and gang related activity

Children who are at risk of criminal exploitation or serious violence may display the following indicators:

- Children who have increased absence from school;
- Children who go missing;
- Children who have a change in friendships;
- Children who have friendships with older individuals or groups;
- Children who have unexplained gifts or money
- Children who display a significant decline in performance;
- Children whose wellbeing declines

Advice for school staff is available in the Home Office [Guidance Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement](#) and [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#).

So called 'Honour Based' Violence

So called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubts staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Indicators

There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 41-42 of the Multi Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). [Multi Agency Statutory Guidance on FGM](#) (pages 60-62 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the [Multi agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage](#).

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** that requires a different approach (see following section).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) mandatory reporting duty

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

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. FGM Fact Sheet. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: [FGM Fact Sheet](#). Further details can be found in Annex A, KCSIE, Sept 2019.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a

way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

- The Forced Marriage Unit has published [Multi-agency guidelines](#), with pages 32-36 focusing on
- the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit
- if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: fmf@fco.gov.uk.

Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Prevent

From 1 July 2015 all schools and all colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("the CTSA 2015"), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". For full details please refer to the [Prevent duty](#).

Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales is specifically concerned with schools (but also cover childcare). There is separate guidance: Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales that applies to colleges. These place a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing boards. Boards to which the duty applies must have regard to statutory guidance issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of The Statutory [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#) are specifically concerned with schools (but also cover childcare). Please refer to this document for further guidance on the following four general themes:

- Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Schools should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. It is not necessary for schools to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty.
- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing boards and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Schools should also discuss any concerns in relation to possible radicalisation with a child's parents in line with the individual school's safeguarding policies and procedures unless they have specific reason to believe that to do so would put the child at risk.
- The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the

light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism.

- Schools must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

There is additional guidance: [Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales](#) that applies to colleges.

Channel

School and college staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel guidance is available at [Channel guidance](#) and an e-learning channel awareness programme for staff is available at: [Channel General Awareness](#).

British Values

All maintained schools must meet the requirements set out in section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of their pupils. Through ensuring pupils' SMSC development, schools can also demonstrate they are actively promoting fundamental British values. Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values. Attempts to promote systems that undermine fundamental British values would be completely at odds with schools' duty to provide SMSC. The Teachers' Standards expect teachers to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. This includes not undermining fundamental British values. To find guidance on British values within schools visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-smsc>

PREVENT REFERRAL PATHWAY



Prevent is 1 of the 4 elements of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Prevent is about safeguarding children, adults and communities and providing early intervention to protect and divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

It is important to remember that safeguarding vulnerable people from radicalisation is no different to safeguarding them from other forms of potential harm.

Useful Links and Resources:

Let's Talk About It – working together to prevent terrorism (<https://www.ital.info>)

Educate Against Hate – (<https://educateagainsthate.com>)

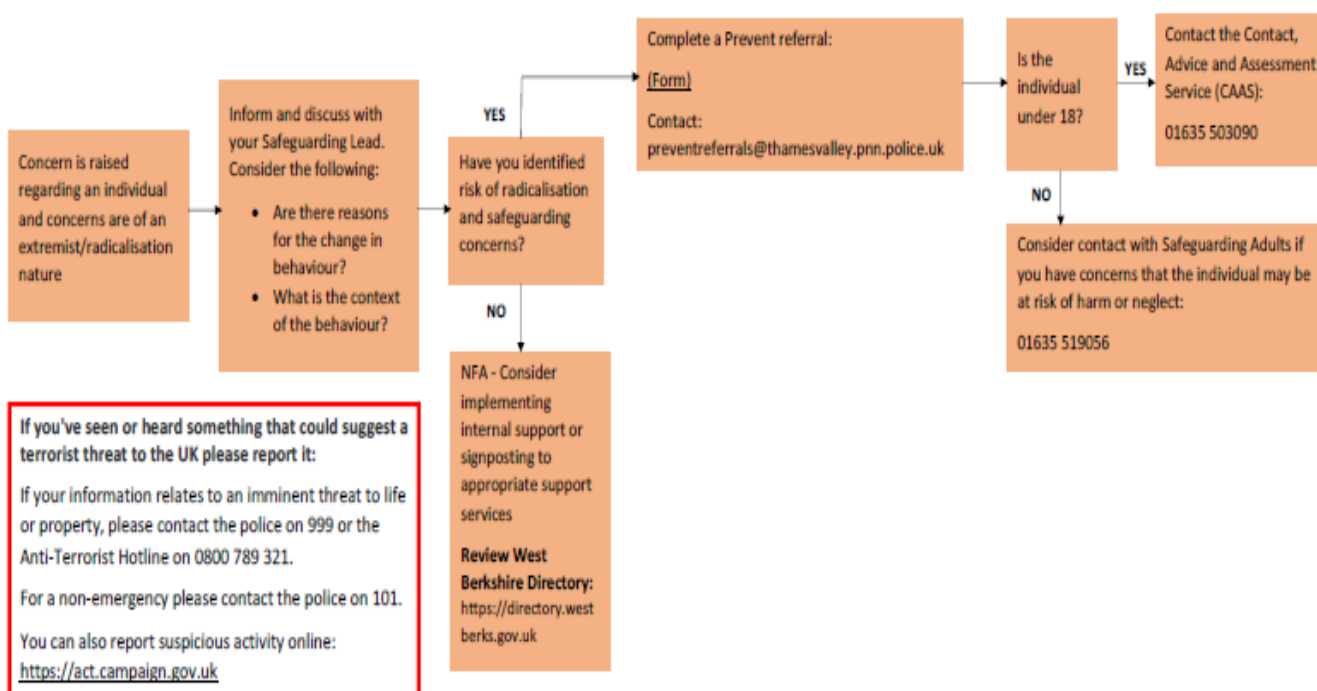
Counter Terrorism Policing – (<https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk>)

Training:

Prevent Awareness (free) - <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk>

Channel Awareness (free) - <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/channelawareness>

Prevent Referrals (free) - <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/preventreferrals>



APPENDIX 4: REFERRAL TO LADO

Worried about an adult who works with children?

We should be alerted to all cases where it is alleged that a person who works with children has

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children

Report your concerns

Report your concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer:

- Call 0118 974 6141
- Email LADO@wokingham.gov.uk

The role applies to

- Paid or unpaid workers
- Volunteers
- Casual workers
- Agency workers
- People who are self employed

The Local Authority Designated Officer is involved from the first stage of an allegation to the end of the case.

We will

- Offer advice and guidance
- Make sure we share information with the right people
- Monitor investigations to make sure they are resolved as quickly as possible

If you believe a child is in immediate danger call the Police on 999

Website: [Report a concern about a child](#)

Provider:

Service provided by Wokingham Borough Council

Who to contact

Telephone 0118 974 6141

Email LADO@wokingham.gov.uk

APPENDIX 5 - ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD, (KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION, 2025 Annex C)

Governing boards and proprietors should ensure an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead.¹⁴³ The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and to contributing to the assessment of children.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Availability

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Teams or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Manage referrals

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;

- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- liaise with the Head teacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a
- referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically; • liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health;
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- work with the Head teacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
 - ensure that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
 - support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children’s educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should 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.

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Part one and Part two of this guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising Awareness

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- ensure the school's or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing boards or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this;
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements; and,
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;

- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

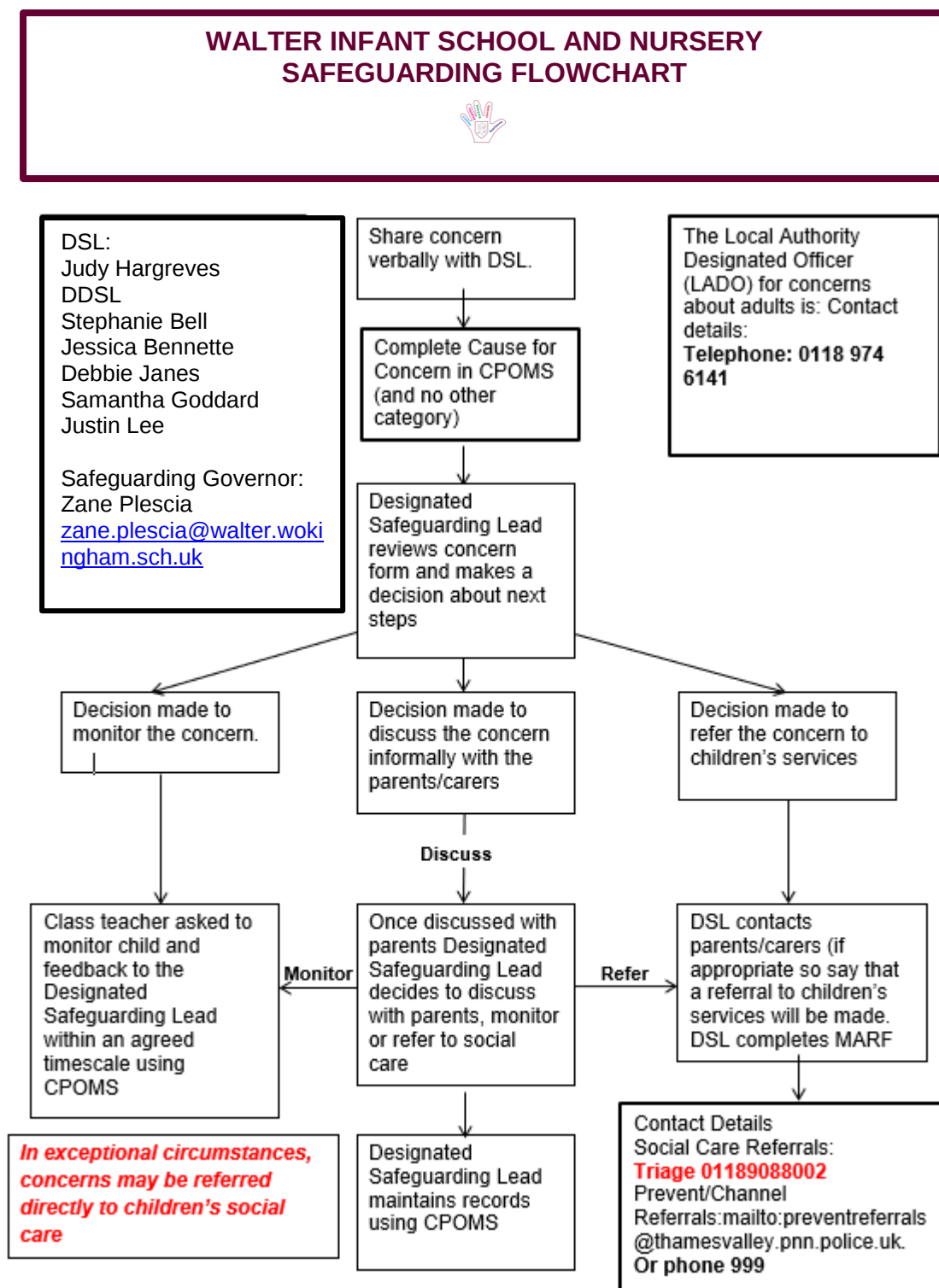
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them; and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR); and,
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

APPENDIX 6 – INFORMATION SHARING ADVICE FOR PRACTITIONERS



APPENDIX 7 – WEB LINKS

National and Local Government Guidance can be found by entering the headings below into your usual search engine

The Government Website www.gov.uk provides a wide range of guidance which is easily accessed from the search box.

The following are particularly useful for schools:-

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)
- [The Education Inspection Framework](#)
- [Ofsted safeguarding policy - Safeguarding children and young people and young vulnerable adults](#)
- [The Children Act 2004 - Section 11 of the Children Act 2004](#)
- [The Education Act 2011 - Section 175 of The Education Act 2011](#)
- [Education and Training \(Welfare of Children\) Act 2021](#)
- [Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults](#)
- [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Serious Violence](#)
- **GDPR**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/711097/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr-1-0.pdf
- **NSPCC helpline to support victims of sexual harassment and abuse in education settings - 0800 136 663**

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