ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

DIOCESE OF LANCASTER

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

2026 – 2027

We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

Approved by (Chair of Governors)	Alex Farrell
Version	41.1 – November 2026
Proposed review date	November 2027
Based on	KAHSC model V41.1 (September 2026)

Our Vision & Mission

The heart of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – shared at the start of every school policy



OUR VISION

In the faithful care of St Joseph, Jesus prospered.
We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

OUR MISSION

St Joseph's is a Catholic primary; we are one family. We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

As a school family we:

- promote the partnership of home, school, church and community;
- pray together, grow in faith and live the Gospel values;
- respect and care for everyone and everything around us;
- value each child as an individual;
- encourage our pupils to develop active and creative minds;
- promote self-esteem and confidence;
- set high standards of learning;
- celebrate the achievements of each and every child.

> *St Joseph's is a Catholic School, in which each individual is valued, cherished and nurtured, as they grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.*

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. Our values are rooted in the Gospel and underpin our relationships, teaching and learning, preparing our pupils as confident, happy citizens. In partnership with parents and the community, our purpose is to provide a high standard of education, recognising each person's talents and enabling them to fulfil their true potential.

Our Gospel Values are understood and respected by adults and children alike, as we learn and play alongside one another, showing love, care and forgiveness in all we do. At St Joseph's we focus on the following Gospel Values:

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Honesty & Forgiveness The Prodigal Son *Luke 15:11–32*	**Respect & Resilience** The Three Wise Men *Matthew 1:1–12*	**Community** Sharing a Meal *Acts 2:46–47*
Thankfulness & Perseverance The Birth of Christ *Luke 2:9–10*	**Generous & Proud** The Good Samaritan *Luke 10:25–37*	**Eloquent & Truthful** Pentecost – The power of the Holy Spirit *Acts 2:1–31*
	Trust Parting of the Red Sea *Exodus 14:21–22*	

Our Mission Statement was written involving all stakeholders in our school – children, parents, staff and governors. It is clearly understood by all, underpinning all we do in school and determining our whole purpose and ethos. We firmly believe that wherever you are in our school you will see our mission statement being lived – in class, in the playground and in our interactions and love of each other.

Document Control

At the time of publishing the following roles were held:	
Head teacher	**Annette Savage**
Designated Safeguarding Lead	**Annette Savage**
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	**Emily Halligan**
Designated Teacher for cared for or previously cared for children	**Annette Savage**
Designated Mental Health Lead (not statutory)	**Annette Savage**
Governor with Safeguarding responsibility	**Rebecca Rennoldson**

Approved by[1]			
Name:	Alex Farrell		
Position:	Chair of Governors		
Signed:	A. Farrell		
Date:	**November 2026**	**Version No:**	**41.1**
Review date[2]**:**	**November 2027**		

[1] This document requires approval from the full Governing Body.

[2] This document must be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes.

Review Sheet

Each entry in this table summarises the changes to these procedures made since the last review

Version Number	KAHSC Version Description	Date of Review/Revision
1	Original	Feb 2012
2	Amendments made to incorporate changes following the introduction of the revised EYFS Statutory Framework 2012	Aug 2012
3	Amendments made following introduction of Cumbria County Council Triage system	Sept 2012
4	Amended to take account of the introduction of the Disclosure and Barring Service	Nov 2012
5	Amended to include the Cumbria Thresholds Guidance documents	Mar 2013
6	Amended to include changes to the Disclosure and Barring Service (June 2013) and to the County Council Triage system including reference to the Single Referral Form	Sept 2013
7	Updated to include DfE revised guidance and reference to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Allegations Notification Form Changes highlighted.	Feb 2014
8	Updates to web links only.	Mar 2014
9	Updated to include minor changes to the Statutory Framework for EYFS due to come into force in September 2014 and the newly published DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' April 2014 and the supporting guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education – Information for all School and College Staff, April 2014.	Apr 2014
10	Further amendments in light of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.	May 2014
11	Revisions to the 'Child Concerns' form and changes to the Early Help/CAF Assessment process issued by the LA which came into force in May 2014and amended to show that the document must now be Approved by the Governing Body or Proprietor.	Sept 2014
12	Update to reference DfE Behaviour and Discipline in Schools - A Guide for Head teachers and School staff - Reviewed Sept 2014	Oct 2014
13	Update to reference change from Cumbria County Triage Service to Cumbria Safeguarding Hub effective 03 November 2014	Nov 2014
14	Updated to include requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009	Jan 2015
15	Updated to include Cumbria Summary of Allegations Management Procedures flowchart	Feb 2015
16	Updated to include changes to DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' March 2015, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' – March 2015 and 'Information Sharing – Guidance for Safeguarding Practitioners' March 2015	Apr 2015
17	Updated to include changes to DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' July 2015	July 2015
18	Updated to include additional information relating to the 'Prevent Duty', CSE, CME etc. Change in title of former 'LADO' to 'DO' throughout.	Nov 2015
19	Document split into Policy and Procedures. References to emotional well-being of pupils also included.	Mar 2016
20	Updated to take account of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' – September 2016	Aug 2016
21	Amended to include best practice advice from Ofsted	Dec 2016
22	Amended to include best practice advice on 'Sexting' from Ofsted	Feb 2017
23	Minor amendments to date of new EYFS Statutory Framework – April 2017	April 2017
24	Updated to include reference to the Contractor Code of Conduct and safe use of contractors	Sept 2017
25	Revisions to information relating to Designated Teacher and day of week added to Concern Form – now linked	March 2018

Version Number	KAHSC Version Description	Date of Review/Revision
26	Updated to take account of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' – September 2018	Aug 2018
27	Updated to take account of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' – September 2019 and changes to create the Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) from 29 September 2019.	Sept 2019
28	Changes made in relation to new Local Authority Designated Officer (DO) contact details and Cumbria Early Help contact details which come into effect 6 January 2020.	Jan 2020
29	Updated to take account of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' – September 2020	Sept 2020
30	Updated to include: advice from UKCIS on under 18's posting nude or semi-nude images, information relating to online challenges and hoaxes; further detail on Operation Encompass and information on new NSPCC helpline for people who have experienced sexual abuse/harassment in education. Also updated Safer Recruitment Policy and procedures to reflect the fact that the UK have now left the EU and references to EU checks. Cross referenced to this Policy and procedures.	April 2021
31	Updated in line with the publication of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 and updated DfE advice for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads on Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges from September 2021. Addition of action flowcharts for dealing with low-level concerns and sexual violence and sexual harassment – now links for school use only.	Sept 2021
32	Updated in line with the publication of statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022. Note the DfE document 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges: Advice for governing bodies, headteachers and DSL's' has now been withdrawn and incorporated into the September 2022 version of KCSiE and into this Policy and procedures and the child on child abuse Policy, where schools have a standalone Policy.	July 2022
33	Updated to include Operation Encompass Teachers' Helpline details and other minor amendments including to reflect introduction to new Unitary authorities.	April 2023
34	Updated in line with the publication of statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023.	Sept 2023
35	Minor change to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) email address (now one for each Council) and updated to take account of revised Gov.UK statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children' (Dec 2023). Updated with new Cumberland Early help telephone number (Procedures, page 10)	Jan 2024 April 2024
36	Updated in line with the publication of revised 'Information Sharing – advice for practitioners' (May 2024) and statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2024) and to take account of terminology used by both Cumbria LAs.	Sept 2024
	Minor update to the link to the Cumberland Safeguarding Hub Single Contact form which came into effect on 18 November 2024. (pages 5 and 20 refer). Only applies to schools with **children living in Cumberland LA.** Schools with children living in Cumberland LA must update their CP Policy accordingly.	Nov 2024
37	Updated to include changes to the name of the Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Hub to Westmorland and Furness Multi-agency Children's Hub and link to Cumberland and W&F revised Single Contact Form. Updated links to new Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements from 1 April 2025.	April 2025
38	Updated to take account of EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers 2025 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. Added information on the retention of documents if a child is removed from school for Elective Home Education. Various links have also been updated.	September 2025
39	Updates to links throughout for the respective Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) websites and the change of name of the Cumberland Safeguarding Hub to Cumberland Children Advice & Support Service (CCASS).	9 September 2025
40	Updated to include that from 7 November 2025 there is a statutory requirement for Police to notify the school when they attend a domestic abuse incident in a child's home, including children who were not physically present at the incident and other minor changes to Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness SCP links to procedures.	February 2026

Version Number	KAHSC Version Description	Date of Review/Revision
41.1	Updates to reflect changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2026) and EYFS statutory framework. Minor changes to reflect KCSiE 01 Sept 2026 version and the new Information sharing duty.	September 2026

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Model Child Report/Concern Record (including Body Map)

Actions where there are concerns about a child (flowchart) – Extract from KCSiE

Cumberland SCP Summary of Allegations Management Procedures flowchart

KAHSC Managing low-level concerns raised in relation to adults who work or volunteer with children

KAHSC Response to reports of child on child HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment (flowchart)

Equality Act and legislation relating to safeguarding requirements (including gender questioning children and social transition) (extract from KCSiE)

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy and procedures a child, young person, pupil or student is referred to as a 'child' or a 'pupil' and they are normally under 18 years of age.

Wherever the term 'parent' is used this includes any person with parental authority over the child concerned e.g. carers, legal guardians etc.

Wherever we use the term 'adults working in or on behalf of the school', this includes: teachers, supply staff, trainee teachers, learning support staff, teaching assistants, mid-day supervisors, admin staff, meals supervisors, cleaner, visiting students, parent helpers/volunteers, governors and other visitors including contractors and other external providers who use the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children.

We use the term 'victim' to describe a child who has been affected by some type of abuse. However, we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a 'victim' or would want to be described in this way and as such, we will use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.

We use the term 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and 'perpetrator(s)' throughout the Policy and procedures but staff and others will be mindful about this terminology, especially when speaking in front of children not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. Language and terminology will be determined as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Child on child abuse may also be referred to as peer on peer abuse or child on child harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual violence and/or sexual harassment and should be taken to mean child on child abuse of any description.

Wherever the term 'school' is used this also refers wraparound care provided by a setting such as breakfast and after school clubs.

2. Introduction

All those working in education can contribute to the safeguarding and protection of the welfare of a child in need. According to the DfE, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interest of the children; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who has contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

The DfE statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education]' (KCSiE) is our first point of reference for child protection and child welfare issues in the school. The guidance has been issued to, read and is followed by:

- members of the governing body;
- the Head teacher and all staff.

Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced. This Child Protection Policy and procedures must be read in conjunction with the school **Overarching Safeguarding Statement** (where this is in place) and other school Policies and procedures (See Section 6 below).

3. Ethos

Our Catholic Vision and Mission

"In the faithful care of St Joseph, Jesus prospered. We care, we belong, we learn together in faith."

St Joseph's is a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school in Frizington, part of the family of schools within the Diocese of Lancaster. We are one family. Our Mission Statement encompasses everyone involved in our school – children, parents, staff and governors – and underpins all that we do, including how we keep our children safe.

We believe that every child is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), and is unique and loved. St Joseph's is a Catholic school in which each individual is valued, cherished and nurtured as they grow in the knowledge and love of Christ. Safeguarding is therefore an expression of our faith: just as St Joseph faithfully protected and cared for the child Jesus, every adult in our school community has a duty to protect and care for the children entrusted to us. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows and cares for each of his sheep (John 10:11–18), and we seek to follow his example by noticing, listening to and acting on behalf of every child.

Our Gospel Values of Community, Forgiveness, Compassion, Respect, Love, Trust, Thankfulness and Honesty shape our relationships. We teach our children to respect and care for everyone and everything around them, and we work in partnership with parents, the parish of St Mary's and St Joseph's and the wider community so that every child feels safe, knows they are listened to, and is confident to speak out if they are worried.

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School (hereinafter referred to as 'the school') the health, safety and wellbeing of all our children is of paramount importance to all the adults who work or volunteer here. All our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, or sexual orientation/identity (protected characteristics). They have a right to be safe in our school; this is enhanced by the adoption of the school's Behaviour Policy and procedures which includes our procedures for preventing and dealing with cases of bullying and a robust Code of Conduct for staff and other adults who work in school.

We are also committed to establishing a safe physical environment in which children can learn and develop both personally and academically and achieve success in the following as stated in the Children Act 2004:

- Be healthy (physically, mentally and emotionally);
- Stay safe (protection from harm and neglect);
- Enjoy and achieve (via education, training and recreation);
- Make a positive contribution to the school community and general society;
- Achieve social and economic wellbeing.

The School regards Child Protection as an essential task of **all** its staff, governors and visitors/volunteers who come into school. We are committed to protecting and safeguarding pupils in school.

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

Any prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils, staff, visitors or parents will always be challenged and, where appropriate, dealt with. Where misconduct by a teacher is proven, the matter will be referred to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) for their consideration. Misconduct by other staff will be dealt with under normal school disciplinary procedures.

We encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and, where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps are taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils.

The use of circle time and assembly time help to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others.

We will ensure the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning and that child protection is included in the curriculum (including online) to help children stay safe, recognise when they don't feel safe and identify who they might/can talk to. We provide a curriculum that will help to equip our children with the skills they need including materials and learning experiences that will encourage them to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours. We recognise that a more personalised or contextualised approach may be required for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children. The PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) curriculum and, where relevant, Relationships Education and RHSE will include elements of how children can recognise different risks in different situations and how to behave in response. It will equip children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe and empower them to feel safe. Reference will be made to the DfE statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

The School recognises the importance of creating and promoting a positive, supportive, neutral and secure environment where pupils can develop a sense of being valued and heard and where they feel safe, secure and respected.

We are aware that children may be susceptible to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which originate from a variety of sources and media, including via the internet, and at times pupils may themselves reflect or display views that may be racist, discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language. It is imperative that our pupils and parents see our school as a safe place where they can discuss and explore controversial issues safely and in an unbiased way and where our teachers and other adults encourage and facilitate this.

Where a pupil is placed with an alternative provision provider, we recognise that as the host school, we remain responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will work closely with the alternative provision provider to ensure the needs of the pupil are appropriately met. See Section 14 of procedures below.

Every effort will be made to work in partnership with other agencies and seek to establish effective working relationships with parents and other colleagues so enabling the Governing Body to fulfil its duty to have in place arrangements about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children introduced by Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Crime and Policing Act 2026).

4. Aims

There are three main aims to our Child Protection Policy:

Prevention: by creating a positive school atmosphere and providing high quality teaching and pastoral support to pupils;

Protection: by following agreed procedures and ensuring staff are appropriately recruited, trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to Child Protection concerns;

Support: by providing support for pupils and school staff and for children who may have been, or are being abused, exploited or neglected.

We will do these things by:

- ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of adults working in 'regulated activity' and appropriately supervising others who are temporarily in school;
- ensuring that members of the Governing Body have read, understood and follow the DfE statutory guidance 'KCSiE';

- ensuring all staff and regular volunteers are aware of, understand and follow the DfE statutory guidance 'KCSiE', and in particular Part one which includes Annex A. It is for the Governing Body, working with the Head teacher and DSL, to decide which staff/volunteers should be provided with the relevant literature appropriate to their role;
- managing behaviour and adopting safe and acceptable restrictive intervention techniques (refer to school Behaviour Policy and procedures for details);
- raising awareness of child protection issues, equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe and empowering children to feel safe;
- being alert to any issues of concern in children's lives at home or elsewhere;
- ensuring that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as outlined in Part one of KCSiE;
- ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school's procedures and lines of communication for reporting concerns or suspected or actual cases of abuse;
- ensuring extra care is taken to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, particularly for **vulnerable groups** such as children with communication/language difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems;
- ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to support cared for and previously cared for children and to keep them safe. Reference will be made to the NICE guidance document 'Looked-after children and young people';
- monitoring and supporting children who have been identified as having welfare or protection concerns in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection Plan;
- keeping confidential records, which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals;
- ensuring all steps are taken to maintain site security and pupils' physical safety by establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop;
- ensuring staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We will ensure that children are adequately supervised and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met. In relation to ratios for the Early Years and Foundation Stage, we follow the statutory guidance in the DfE EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers and refer to additional guidance produced by the DfE 'Safeguarding guidance for early years providers';
- maintaining robust records, Policies and procedures.

5. Entitlement

We accept and embrace our legal responsibilities under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) which sets out the fundamental right and freedoms that everyone is entitled to. Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature may breach any or all of the rights made under the HRA depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances.

We also have obligations under the Equality Act 2010. We will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils or staff because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). Each child in our school, regardless of their background or home circumstances could be the victim of abuse, whether it is by a parent, an adult known to them, another child or peer or a complete stranger. They are therefore all entitled to the same degree of protection and support. Each child in our school will also develop the skills appropriate to their age and understanding which could enable prevention of abuse by learning about keeping safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened.

We have and implement an Equality Policy with objectives to promote equality of opportunity for children in our care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities, those identified as 'carers', cared for or previously cared for children and those with protected characteristics. Our Equality Policy takes account of the whole school community but specifically for children, how the individual needs of all children will be met (including how those children who are disabled, have special educational needs or other health conditions will be included, valued and supported, and how reasonable adjustments will be made for them); the name of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator; arrangements for recording, reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices that promote and value

diversity and difference; how we will advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; how inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged; and how the provision will encourage children to value and respect others.

6. Implementation

This Policy and supporting procedures apply to all who come into contact with children in the School (see definitions above).

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other related school Policies and procedures and any current local or national public health related advice affecting the safety and welfare of children including:

- Overarching Safeguarding Statement
- Health and Safety Policy and procedures
- Online Safety Policy and procedures
- Behaviour Policy and procedures including the use of mobile phones in school, preventing and dealing with bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based, and discriminatory bullying and the potential for radicalisation) and racism, drug misuse, restrictive intervention (including the use of reasonable force) etc.
- Code of Conduct for Staff and other adults
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy
- Safer Recruitment, Selection and Pre-Employment Vetting Policy and procedures
- School Single Central Record (restricted access)
- Equality Policy/Objectives
- Accessibility Plan
- Data Protection Policy and procedures
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy and procedures
- Allergy Safety Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy/Information Report
- Whistleblowing procedures
- Intimate Care procedures
- Educational Visits procedures (including procedures for assessing risks)
- First Aid and Accident procedures
- Attendance Policy and procedures
- Missing Child procedures
- First Day Calling procedures
- Emergency Plan(s) (including Lockdown procedures)
- Guidance on the use of photographic/digital and video images
- Procedures for protecting children when contractors are working in educational settings
- Code of Conduct for adults visiting or working on a school site (leaflet)
- Risk Assessments
- Premises Management including security measures (formal inspections and Buildings Register)
- School hire arrangements.

and DfE, Ofsted and the Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) guidance as outlined in 'Referenced statutory and non-statutory guidance'.

7. Child protection during emergencies

During periods of uncertainty such as emergencies including local or large scale public health incidents, it is particularly important to safeguard children who may be at an increased risk of abuse, harm and exploitation from a range of sources. The procedures which follow this Policy statement will be adhered to at all times, but we recognise that amendments or additions may be required in order to support those directly affected by an emergency. All children are vulnerable, but some may be especially so during periods where they or their households are excluded from school or work. It is equally important to safeguard families, with parents facing significant pressures to continue to protect and promote the welfare of their children. These parents may already be struggling and so with additional pressure the likelihood of harm may increase. In all

known or emerging child protection cases, staff (particularly those with safeguarding responsibilities) will be mindful of the affects an emergency situation may have on families and children.

Additional issues which may need consideration or action include:

Poverty - where families are unable to meet the basic needs of children, this can, in some cases, lead to an increased likelihood of abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

Reduced access to support networks – resulting in children who are abused and harmed being unseen and unheard.

Accommodation - Vulnerable children and families can often face challenges with their accommodation. They may have temporary accommodation or a lack of space which is exacerbated by the fact that the whole family may be excluded from school or work, unable to leave the family home for exercise and social contact, which can lead to an increase in abuse and neglect

Domestic abuse – A large scale public health incident or similar situation can disrupt routines and behaviours, both positively and negatively and it is important to be aware of how the tension can escalate to violence and abusive behaviours between families, parents and children.

Substance abuse - Unhealthy coping mechanisms can involve a reliance on substances that provide relief and escapism by adults and children alike. Substances alter the behaviour of parents and create a lack of safety for children. It is important to understand how families manage the stresses faced during an emergency or large scale public health incident - with associated worries around employment, finances and health.

Neglect – Self or household isolation can place children at a greater risk of neglect. This is compounded by the increased economic challenges and poverty that families may be facing, and by the increased exposure of children to neglectful environments.

Children with additional needs - Children with additional needs and disabilities are more likely to be abused, exploited or neglected than non-disabled children, and less likely to disclose harm due to communication and other difficulties. With localised public health incidents that affect the opening of schools or require exclusion, families may find increased time at home and additional caring responsibilities, a strain.

We will consider how to seek the voice of the child during these times, and whether online or telephone contact is enough to ensure their wellbeing and safety. This is especially important where communication difficulties make these means less effective.

Remote education – during periods where remote education is required, our communications with parents will be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and we will provide details of the systems we use in school to filter and monitor online use. We will be clear on what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school their child is going to be interacting with.

8. Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually (as a minimum) and more often should legislation or statutory guidance change and to keep up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews both locally and nationally.

PROCEDURES

1. Roles and responsibilities

All governors and staff have a shared responsibility to safeguard children. The Governing Body and the School Leadership Team, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies, will make themselves aware of and follow the local safeguarding partnership arrangements. Locally, the three safeguarding partners (Cumberland Council; Cumbria Constabulary; North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board) will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies (including schools) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

1.1 The role of the Governing Body/Proprietors

The Governing Body will ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding, ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. The school will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture where racism, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of our safeguarding responsibilities. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies will operate with the **best interests** of the child at their heart.

The Chair of Governors will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and partner agencies in the event of a concern or allegation made against the Head teacher or member of Governing Body.

The Governing Body is accountable for ensuring that it and the establishment:

- promotes and embeds a culture and environment of openness, trust and transparency so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters of concern both within, and where appropriate, outside of the workplace which may have implications for the safeguarding and welfare of children;
- has a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements;
- ensures that **all** governors and receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction. Any training should include an element of online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training will be regularly updated;
- ensures that **all** governors read and understand their responsibilities described in Part two and Annex B (role of the DSL) of KCSiE;
- ensures that **all** governors understand their responsibilities under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector duty);
- understands its role in contributing to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working together to Safeguard children;
- has appointed an appropriate senior member of staff, from the School Leadership Team to the role of DSL with a named deputy. The role of Deputy DSL is not a legal requirement but will enable the statutory requirement to have a member of staff with Safeguarding Lead responsibilities always available to staff during school hours should the DSL be unavailable for any reason. The DSL will have appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training and resources to carry out the duties of the post and will take lead responsibility for supporting other staff, safeguarding and child protection. The responsibilities are explicit in the role-holders' job descriptions;
- contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and DfE statutory information sharing duty guidance 'Information sharing Duty: Statutory guidance for safeguarding organisations and their practitioners';
- provides a co-ordinated offer of Family help (including targeted Early Help) when additional needs of children are identified and contribute to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans;

- has provided the means to ensure that **all staff** in the school have **read** Part one of KCSiE and has mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their relevant role and responsibilities. A proportionate risk -based approach will be given to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors;
- has effective Policies and procedures in place for child protection and staff behaviour (part of the Behaviour Policy and procedures and the Staff Code of Conduct) and Online Safety which are provided to staff and volunteers on induction and which are transparent, clear and easy to understand;
- ensures that safeguarding training for staff, including in relation to online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning. In doing so, the Governors will have regard to the Teachers' Standards;
- has safeguarding arrangements which take account of the procedures and practice of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Cumberland SCP;
- actively promotes fundamental British values as part of the school's broad and balanced curriculum to ensure pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development;
- assesses the risk, taking local context into account, of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology;
- ensures that online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing their whole school approach to safeguarding and related policies and procedures. As a result, consideration will be given as to how online safety is reflected, as required, in all relevant policies; how online safety is included in the curriculum and how to keep parents engaged in online safety;
- has appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems in place (informed by an appropriate risk assessment), having identified the Head teacher (as the senior leader) and a Governor to be responsible for ensuring the DfE Filtering and Monitoring standards are being met along with identification of the roles and responsibilities of staff and third parties, for example, external services providers;
- has procedures in place for monitoring online safety and regularly monitors systems and practices to ensure their school leaders are keeping children safe online. UKCIS guidance 'Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the Governing Board' is used to ensure this;
- has carefully considered how pupils and students are being supported with regard to particular protected characteristics including sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation;
- has a culture of listening to children, taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- ensures the child's wishes or feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to confidentially report any form of abuse, exploitation or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback;
- has a robust system of monitoring child protection concerns in place with appropriate child protection files which are appropriately maintained;
- has arrangements in place for supporting pupils with medical conditions;
- has a written Recruitment and Selection Policy and procedures in place including having at least one person on any appointment panel who has undertaken safer recruitment training;
- prevents people who pose a risk of harm from working with children (whether paid or unpaid) by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff and other adults working in or on behalf of the school, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers not in 'regulated activity' are appropriately supervised;
- has procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations against adults working in or on behalf of the school that comply with DfE statutory guidance 'KCSiE', Cumberland SCP and locally agreed inter-agency procedures;
- has procedures for dealing with allegations against other children (child on child abuse). This will generally be in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy and procedures and this Child Protection Policy in the first instance;
- has appointed a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of cared for or previously cared for children ensuring that this person has appropriate training;
- ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep cared for or previously cared for children safe and have the information they need in relation to a child's 'cared for' legal status

(whether they are cared for 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;
- operates a Whistleblowing procedure and will remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses in relation to child protection arrangements that is brought to its attention without delay;
- has appropriate safeguarding responses to children who are absent from school, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods. Such responses will help identify any patterns or trends in a child's absences, the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and help prevent the risk of them being absent in the future;
- ensures staff members are aware that they must not promise confidentiality to a child and must always act in the best interests of the child;
- has a termly or annual child protection item on the Governing Body agenda;
- undertakes a full audit of the Safeguarding systems and procedures in place on an annual basis.

1.2 The role of the Head teacher

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to:

- ensure that the Policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body are fully implemented and followed by all staff and, where appropriate, by other adults;
- ensure that all staff receive an appropriate induction to the work (paid or unpaid) they are to undertake in the school and that this includes a section on the procedures to follow if they are worried about a child or the management of child protection generally in the setting;
- ensure all staff and, where appropriate, volunteers attend or are given access to training in child protection procedures and strategies to enable them to identify children who may be at risk from all forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect or harm either inside or outside the school or home and online;
- ensure sufficient resources, authority and time is allocated to enable the DSL (where this is not one and the same person) and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including attending training (including online safety training) at regular intervals, taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children;
- ensure that online safety is appropriately monitored and reviewed by undertaking an annual review of the school's approach to online safety, supported by an annual review of the risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks the children face. We will use appropriate tools for this purpose such as the self-review tool 360° safe or LGfL online safety audit;
- ensure all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in relation to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner by supporting the Whistleblowing and low-level concerns procedures.

1.3 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The School has a member of the School Leadership Team designated by the Governing Body as the Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will provide support to staff members and other adults to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as the Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CASS). The DSL (and any deputy/ies) is most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture of an individual child or family background. The role of the DSL (and any deputies) is explicit in the role-holder's job description and includes the roles outlined in KCSiE Annex B – Role of the designated safeguarding lead.

During term-time the DSL and/or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding allegation, or concern (no matter how small). In exceptional circumstances this can be via phone and/or Microsoft Teams or other such media. Arrangements will be made to ensure that access to the DSL or a deputy will be available to staff during off-site visits or other extra-curricular activities taking place outside normal school hours.

We have robust cover arrangements for the DSL role and the deputy DSL's will be trained to the same standard as the DSL.

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection (including in relation to online safety), as set out below, remains with the DSL, this **lead responsibility** should not be delegated.

The DSL will have knowledge and skills for recognising and acting upon Child Protection concerns, having received appropriate training. The DSL is also the 'Prevent Single Point of Contact' (SPOC).

Liaison and referrals: the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- act as a point of contact, liaise with and, where requested, supply information to local statutory children's services agencies and the three safeguarding partners which make up Cumberland SCP in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- discuss with Police and CASS colleagues the local response to HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment between children so that they are confident as to what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) and how to access this support when required;
- refer to Police individual incidents or issues, where deemed necessary. The NPCC guidance 'When to call the Police' will help DSLs understand when they should consider calling the Police. This will include being aware of the requirements for children to have access to an 'appropriate adult' (both on and off-site) who can support them when the Police or other agency professional requests to see, question or search a child. In all such cases, the school remains legally responsible for the child in their care and it may be necessary to seek clarification from the agency on their reasons for the request to ensure the child is properly supported and where required, parents are informed before **any** such requests are sanctioned;
- refer all cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the CASS (see Section 5 for contact and referral details) in accordance with the Cumberland Multi-agency Threshold guidance;
- make a referral to the CASS immediately if, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child – **anybody can make a referral**;
- where required to do so, liaise with the "Case Manager" and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the case of a concern or allegation made against a member of staff or other adult;
- refer to the DBS anyone (paid or unpaid) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child and who has been removed from working in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not voluntarily left the school/setting. See also Section 24 below;
- refer concerns about pupils who may have disappeared or whose transfer has raised concerns to Children's Services Children Missing Education (CME) Officer;
- ensure that an indication of further child protection record-keeping is marked on the pupil records;
- ensure that the most relevant trained person attends case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to assessments, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents where necessary;
- ensure that any child currently on a Child protection Plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team;
- understand and support the school in relation to the requirements of the Prevent duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- be aware of the local procedures for making a 'Prevent' referral;
- inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working with a child (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere) and notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations;
- liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurse, IT technician, SENCO and Senior Mental Health Lead) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and act as a source of support, advice and expertise within school when deciding to make a referral to the CASS;
- liaise with the Head teacher (where this is not one and the same person) to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 17 (children in need) and section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and Police investigations.

Training: the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

receive appropriate training, updated every two years (see Section 6 below) in order to:

- understand the assessment process for providing Family help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as Family Help Assessments;

- have a working knowledge of how the Local Authority 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;
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff, supply staff, trainee teachers and volunteers/students;
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs, young carers and those at risk of radicalisation or child sexual exploitation;
- understand and support staff in challenging inappropriate behaviours associated with HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment among all children, paying particular attention to those who are or are perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual;
- understand the issues relating to harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) in order to plan preventative education and implement preventative measures;
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, collectively known as 'data protection laws';
- understand their role in contributing to multi-agency working and the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the three safeguarding partners, other local agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand the unique risks associated with online safety (including an understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place in the school) 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 and to support other adults in doing so;
- recognise the additional risks that children with SEN, disabilities (SEND) and other medical or physical health conditions face both online and offline, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;
- be able to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of **all** concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions regardless of whether referrals were or were not made to another agency;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses and, where required, disseminate information learned from training to others in the setting;
- encourage a culture among all staff and other adults of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

Raising awareness: the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- ensure that, during the induction process, all staff and volunteers are made aware of, and understand, the setting's Child Protection Policy and procedures, the school Code of Conduct for staff and other adults and are provided with a copy of KCSiE Part one, DfE guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and the Cumberland SCP 'Summary of allegations management procedures' flowchart;
- ensure that all staff are made aware of and understand the school's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods;
- ensure that all staff and other adults are made aware of the appropriate language/terminology to use when speaking in front of or to children – see definitions of 'victim' and 'alleged perpetrator(s)' and 'perpetrator(s)' outlined on page 1 of the Policy statement;
- ensure the school's procedures are known and followed by staff, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, exploitation, neglect, modern slavery, child on child abuse and issues relating to HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment;
- ensure the school's Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually (more often should the need arise) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Governing Body regarding this;
- ensure the Child Protection Policy and procedures is available on the school website and parents are aware that referrals about suspected abuse, exploitation or neglect may be made to other agencies;
- link with the Cumberland safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local procedures on safeguarding;

- ensure that all EYFS practitioners are trained in line with the criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers. The DSL must provide support, advice and guidance to all practitioners on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required.
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers (on a need to know basis) and school leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school and its staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face (both online and offline) and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children;
- where children leave the school (including for in-year transfers), the DSL will ensure their Child Protection file is forwarded to any new school 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 to allow the new school to have support in place for when the child arrives. The DSL should ensure secure transit and a confirmation of receipt should be obtained. The file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file. A copy of the chronology will be retained in school. Consideration will also be given to whether information should be shared with the new school significantly in advance of a child leaving the school, particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual pupil. In such cases, a conversation between the DSL's of both schools may be beneficial. Further information on the child protection file is outlined in Annex B of KCSiE;
- where a child is removed from school for Elective Home Education, we will securely retain any pupil Child Protection file for the legal time period (dob + 25 years). Such files will be sealed, marked with the pupil name and date of birth and the date of final secure disposal.

1.4 The designated teacher for cared for and previously cared for children

The most common reason for children becoming cared for[1] is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. A previously cared for child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep both cared for and previously cared for children safe.

The designated teacher for cared for and previously cared for children has appropriate training, relevant qualifications and experience and lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how cared for children learn and achieve in line with the DfE statutory guidance 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children – Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities'. Non-statutory guidance on 'Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements' contains further information on the roles and non-statutory responsibilities of Virtual School Heads.

1.5 The role of teachers

Teachers, including the Head teacher, will safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties in line with the Teachers' Standards 2011 (updated 2013 and 2021).

1.6 The role of the school counsellor

Ensuring confidentiality between the child or young person and counsellor is crucial to the success of the relationship and the outcomes of counselling. A frequent concern raised by children who have not experienced counselling services is that others will be informed about what has been discussed in sessions. While counsellors are used to working within confidentiality codes, they will be aware that there is no such thing as absolute confidentiality when working with children. Child protection concerns and the welfare of children will, at times, need to take precedence over confidentiality.

[1] Cumberland Council's preferred terminology for looked-after children

Counsellors should discuss difficult decisions about disclosures/reports with their clinical supervisor and line manager and, if appropriate, the DSL within the school. Where they think anyone is at risk of harm, they **must** report this to the DSL immediately.

1.7 The role of ALL staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers and volunteers)

- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- All staff have a responsibility to read and properly understand KCSiE (Part one), DfE guidance 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused', the School Code of Conduct for staff and other adults, the School's Child Protection Policy and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child regardless of the presumed seriousness.
- All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, exploitation, neglect and modern slavery, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for early identification of children who may need help or protection.
- All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited, neglected or otherwise at risk of harm. **Always** speak to the DSL (or a deputy). Where the DSL or a deputy is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the School Leadership Team and/or take advice from the CASS. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL (or a deputy) as soon as possible.
- All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes (including the use of AI) can be signs that children are at risk. Further information relating to other signs of harm are set out in Part one of KCSiE.
- All staff should recognise that prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other forms of discriminatory behaviour may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety. Staff should ensure that all cases are reported to the DSL as soon as possible.
- All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (child on child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. Staff should be clear on and understand the importance of their role in preventing and responding to it and be clear on the school Policy and procedures. See Section 11 below.
- All staff should be able to reassure victims (regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting **any** form of abuse and/or neglect, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children which facilitate communication. The language/terminology staff use in individual situations may be critical and staff should be aware of how important it is to use appropriate language and terminology on a case by case basis. See definitions on page 1 of the Policy statement.
- All staff are advised to speak to the DSL or a deputy should they have a concern about the mental health of a child as this can, in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, exploitation and/or neglect.
- All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early help and understand their role in it. (See Section 2.1 below). This includes identifying emerging problems, providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge, promoting children's welfare and preventing concerns from escalating, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification whether this is when problems are first emerging (for example, persistent school absences) or where a child is already known to the CASS and, in some cases, acting as the lead

professional in undertaking an Early help assessment. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for Early help can be found in Working together to safeguard children.

- All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to the CASS, along with the role they might be expected to play in any assessment.
- All staff should be aware of and understand the school's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods;
- All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. Staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse (in all its forms) in situations outside their families and understand how to handle reports of HSB, sexual violence and/or harassment between children, both on and outside school premises.
- All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual making and sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the making and sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.
- If a staff member has any concerns about a child who is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, they should act on them immediately. There should be a conversation with the DSL (or a deputy) to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to the CASS. If a referral is made by a member of staff, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to the CASS immediately – **anybody can make a referral**.

2. Supporting pupils at risk

Our school recognises that children who are abused, exploited or neglected or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of the children at risk.

We will endeavour to support pupils through:

- a curriculum which encourages self-esteem and self-motivation;
- the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment where everyone is valued;
- listening to the child's views and concerns with an open mind;
- the implementation of a shared Behaviour Policy and procedures;
- a consistent approach which supports all children;
- regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families;
- the development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

In addition to the above, as part of wider safeguarding responsibilities, school staff will be alert to:

- reports by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where pupils have not actively sought these out;
- graffiti symbols, writing or artwork promoting extremist messages or images;
- pupils accessing extremist material on-line, including through social networking sites;
- parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions and requests for assistance;
- local schools, LA services and Police reports of issues affecting pupils in other schools or settings;
- pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives;
- use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence;
- intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our Equality Policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, homophobia, race, colour or culture;
- attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others;
- anti-western or anti-British views.

2.1 Children who may be particularly vulnerable and Early Help Assessment

Family help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. It is not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area. All staff are made aware of the process for community-based Early help assessments. Sections 585-595 of KCSiE provides further guidance.

All children are vulnerable, but some may be at increased risk of neglect and/or abuse and would especially benefit from an Early help assessment. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, e.g. the targeted early help level of Family help, but we are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)). See 2.4 below;
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours;
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement, knife crime and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care;
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of, or has been, permanently excluded from schools and in an Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit;
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal, sexual or financial exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism;
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing alcohol and/or other drugs themselves;
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- is a privately fostered child or is in kinship care. See 2.8 below;

The Cumberland Early Help Team can be contacted on:

Telephone No: **0333 240 1727;** or
Email: early.help@cumberland.gov.uk

In addition to the above, we will refer to Chapter 3 of the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children and guidance issued by the Cumberland SCP - Early Help.

Consideration will be given for specific needs, including but not exclusive to, family members who may have learning difficulties/disabilities or those whose first language is not English, are care-experienced, young parents, fathers or male carers and parents who identify as LGBT. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats.

An Early Help assessment is not a prerequisite for a referral but where one has been undertaken, it should be used to support the referral. Any cases resulting in Early Help will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to the CASS for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

2.2 Children in need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or

further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Some children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. There are clear powers to share this information on both LAs and schools.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding and about promoting welfare.

2.3 Children requiring mental health support

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils including those with the potential to self-harm or who disclose suicidal thoughts. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect exploitation and/or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experience. The Governing body will ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should speak to the DSL or the Mental Health Lead. We have an identified Mental Health Lead in school who will work closely with the DSL and other senior leaders to embed a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

More information can be found in the DfE guidance 'Mental health and behaviour in schools' and guidance and principles contained in the UKHSA document 'Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing' and DfE resources 'Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools'. In relation to supporting pupils who may be or suspected to have an eating disorder, be self-harming or experiencing suicidal thoughts, we use the guidance from NICE 'Self-harm: assessment, management and preventing recurrence' and from Papyrus (Prevention of young suicide) 'Disclosure of suicidal thoughts'. Pupils with SEN/Disabilities or physical health issues

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN), disabilities or certain health conditions (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan) can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation 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 condition without further exploration;
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination and bullying) than other children;
- children with SEN, disabilities and other certain health conditions can be disproportionally impacted by things like bullying and peer group isolation – without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers and understanding that what is happening to them is abuse; and
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so.

The potential need for Early Help and extra pastoral support in this group of children is considered as a priority and will require close liaison with the DSL/DDSL and the SENDCo.

2.4 Elective Home Education (EHE)

We are aware of the DfE guidance for local authorities on Elective home education and will work with the LA and parents when a parent has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home. The appropriate LA will be informed of the parents' wishes via the EHE process outlined on the school portal. Form EHE1 (available from the school portal) will be fully and appropriately completed and returned to the LA Elective Home Education Team. Further information on our responsibilities in relation to pupils removed from the school to be home educated are available from Cumberland Council - Elective Home Education Policy. There is no legal requirement for parents to discuss home education with the school. Once a child has left the school for Elective Home Education we will securely retain the pupil's file and Child Protection file (where relevant) for the legal time period (dob + 25 years).

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

The fact that a child or a young person may be lesbian, gay or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, such children can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be lesbian, gay or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

Risks can be compounded where children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. We will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Caution is necessary for children questioning their gender and there may be many unknowns about the impact of social transition coupled with wider vulnerabilities such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or ADHD. We will encourage families/carers who are making decisions about support for gender questioning children to seek clinical help and advice. In addition, we will take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs in partnership with the child's parents (unless this would increase the likelihood of significant harm to the child) including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Additional information in relation to gender questioning children, considering requests for support with social transition, constraints and wider policy implications is outlined in KCSiE paras 254-284 and in the KAHSC extract 'The Equality Act and legislation relating to safeguarding requirements (including gender questioning children and social transition)'. This extract from KCSiE (to which schools must refer) includes information on equality issues relating to premises (toilets, changing rooms and showers), boarding and residential accommodation including off-site visits and sport.

2.6 Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. **All** staff, but especially the DSL (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Additional information on contextual safeguarding is available from Contextual safeguarding.org - contextual safeguarding toolkits.

2.7 Private fostering/kinship care

Private fostering or kinship care occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation for 28 days or more by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. Staff will remain alert to, and, when it comes to their attention, report to the DSL, information which suggests a child is being privately fostered or is in kinship care. The DSL will then notify the LA to allow the LA to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

3. Recognising types of abuse and neglect and significant harm

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of **significant harm** as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, or other honour-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage), and extra-familial harm such as exploitation by criminal and organised crime groups and individuals (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, teenage relationship abuse, and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation. Children of all ages can experience extra-familial harm.

Where there are concerns that more than one child may be experiencing harm in an extra-familial context, the DSL will consider the individual needs of each child as well as work with the group. The children in the group may or may not already be known to the CASS. Working with the whole group enables the DSL and other practitioners to build an understanding of the dynamics between those within the group and the extra-familial context.

All school staff are made aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with their DSL or a deputy.

3.1 Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse, neglect or exploit a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour and economic or financial abuse) where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial context by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse and sibling abuse.

3.2 Physical abuse

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

3.3 Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent 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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another – for example where there is domestic abuse, fighting or violence in the home. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

For more information, see our procedures for preventing and dealing with bullying within the school's Behaviour Policy and procedures.

3.4 Child Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration) and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Child sexual abuse material available online may have been generated in a family environment. Online abuse can also take the form of cyber-grooming or self-generated sexual content under coercion. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not.

The Crime and Policing Act 2026 introduced a statutory duty on those working in 'regulated activity to make a report to the Police if they:

- Are told about child sexual abuse, either by a child or an adult involved;
- Witness child sexual abuse in person; or,

- See or hear it in the form of images, videos or audio recordings.

Anyone who prevents or attempts to deter someone else from reporting will face criminal charges.

3.5 Neglect

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

3.6 Specific safeguarding issues (including those listed in Annex A)

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, NSPCC offers information for schools on its website https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/resources.

The Cumberland SCP Procedures Manual provides specific guidance on a range of safeguarding issues which we may have to address. The following are listed in Annex A of KCSiE and include additional information of which all staff should be aware.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) including County lines
Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office Child exploitation disruption toolkit and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals and NSPCC guidance 'Protecting children from child criminal exploitation'.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – all suspected cases of CSE will be referred to the CASS. Further information is available from DfE guidance 'Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners' and Cumberland SCP Child Exploitation.

Child Financial Exploitation (CFE)
Further information on CFE is available from The Children's Society 'Financial Exploitation'.

Children and the Court system

Children who are absent from education
We follow and adhere to the Cumberland SCP guidance and procedures on Children who go missing from Home or Care, Children missing from education and Children who go missing throughout the school day and DfE statutory guidance Children missing education. In line with current best practice and, where possible, we will request from parents at least **3** emergency contacts for each pupil which will allow us to contact a responsible adult in the event of a child being absent from school.

Children with family members in prison

Cybercrime

Homelessness – includes information on the new duty under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act on local housing authorities in England to notify schools when a child is placed in temporary accommodation.

Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
Further information and training is available from the Home Office Modern slavery training: resource page and statutory guidance Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims.

Preventing radicalisation and the Prevent duty (including referral to Channel) - Statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools. This school uses resources taken from the Government sponsored website 'educateagainsthate' and the DfE guidance 'Managing the risk of radicalisation in your education setting'.

Serious violence

Further advice on this issue is provided in the Home Office document 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement'. DSL's can find further guidance on referrals and when to contact the Police in KCSiE Annex B (Manage referrals).

Honour based abuse including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Includes information on mandatory reporting by teachers. Reference should also be made to the HM Government Multi agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation.

Domestic abuse – Any one incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, sibling abuse and child/adolescent to parent or carer violence and abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside the home. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological or emotional abuse (including coercive and controlling behaviour);
- physical or sexual abuse;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- economic/financial (access to basic resources like food and clothing).

Controlling or coercive behaviour is a pattern of abuse (on two or more occasions) that involves multiple behaviours and tactics used by a perpetrator to (but not limited to) hurt, humiliate, intimidate, exploit, isolate, and dominate the victim. More information about controlling or coercive behaviour, including the impact on children can be found in the Controlling or coercive behaviour: statutory guidance and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021: statutory guidance.

The 2021 Act introduced the fact that children can be victims of, and be adversely affected by, domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child and where the child may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse and are related to either victim or perpetrator of the abuse, or either the victim or perpetrator of the abuse has parental responsibility for that child. Exposure to domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development, and ability to learn.

When identifying children who are or may be affected by domestic abuse, we take account of the Cumberland SCP Domestic Abuse advice and guidance. We also have a Domestic Abuse Policy and procedures which encompasses both the school workforce and, more widely, others affected by domestic abuse.

Children are recognised as victim of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act. Our school is part of Operation Encompass (OE). This is a Police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience domestic abuse. The Police have a statutory duty to notify a child's education setting when they attend a domestic abuse incident in a child's home, including children who were not physically present at the incident. This sharing of information will occur PRIOR to the start of the next school day. The DSL will cascade information as a result of an OE review meeting to others in the school on a need to know basis.

Our parents are fully aware that we are an OE school, we display OE posters in the school and have used the OE school specific handbooks to inform our thinking. The OE information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information. The Key Adult has also led training for all school staff and Governors about OE, the prevalence of domestic abuse and the impact of this abuse on children. We have also discussed how we can support our children following the OE notification. We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk. The Safeguarding Governor will report on OE in the termly report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports. The Key Adult has used the OE Toolkit to ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken by the school.

The OE Teachers' Helpline is available for all education staff to speak in confidence with an educational or clinical psychologist about how best to support children in their school who may be experiencing domestic abuse. The Helpline is available on 0204 513 9990. Calling the Helpline should not replace statutory safeguarding processes.

The NSPCC have a number of guidance briefings which may help school staff identify signs that children are being affected by domestic abuse – **see Referenced Statutory and non-Statutory Guidance for** more information and links.

Making and sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes including those generated by AI – All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to in line with this Policy, which includes advice on HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment (such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse) between children.

Images may be taken by the child themselves (sometimes referred to as 'self-generated imagery') or taken or created by another person. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence (AI), including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'.

Any direct report by a pupil (male or female) will be taken very seriously. When an incident involving the non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes images via the internet (livestreams) or mobile device comes to a school's attention the school will follow the guidance as set out in the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) publication 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes - Advice for education settings working with children and young people' which also includes advice on responding to incidents and safeguarding children. A copy of this document is held in the School Office. A summary version of this guidance in particular, how the school will respond to an incident, will be shared with all staff as part of their Child Protection regular updated training. **Staff should not view or forward illegal images of a child.**

4. What school staff should do if they have concerns about a child

If staff have concerns about a child, they should raise these with the DSL or a deputy. In situations of alleged abuse involving adults working in or on behalf of the school, refer to allegations guidance at Section 9 and Whistleblowing at Section 12.

Wherever possible, there should be a conversation with the DSL (or a deputy). Options will include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes;
- an Early help assessment; or
- a referral to the CASS for statutory services.

All staff are required to report any concerns in CPOMs our online recording and reporting system. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or report of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm; it is crucial that staff record and pass on their concerns in accordance with these procedures to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

The DSL will decide whether to make a referral to the CASS, but it is important to note that where a staff member feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may refer their concerns to the CASS directly. The NSPCC have a whistleblowing advice line for professionals who have concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in either their or another organisation. Call 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency (for example education, health, housing, Police) there will be an inter-agency assessment. The Early Help Assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

If, at any point, there is a risk of actual or likely significant harm to a child, a referral should be made to the CASS immediately. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration.

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

Refer to the 'Actions' flowcharts on pages 27 and 28 of 'KCSiE'.

5. Dealing with a report from a child

If a child makes a report to a member of staff or other adult working in school s/he should write a record of the conversation as soon as possible, stating exactly, in the child's words, what has been said, noting any action taken in cases of possible abuse. It is essential that all children are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. [This must be signed and include the day of the week, date, time and place of the report. All records must be held securely. Where an electronic system is used such as CPOMS, schools should refer to the method of reporting here.

Inform the DSL, who will evaluate the assessment and concern record. Initial contact will be made with the CASS where necessary (see below).

The DSL can make a telephone referral to the CASS (see below) and confirm in writing via the Cumberland Children Advice & Support Service (CASS) Single Contact on-line form. **The initial referral may be made by telephone but must be followed up via the on-line reporting system within 48 hours.**

If a referral needs to be made, or consultation with any other agency is deemed necessary, then we recognise that it is good practice to inform the parents and child of actions to be taken unless this may jeopardise a police investigation or place the child at risk of significant harm.

Within one working day of a referral being received, the CASS should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and a social work qualified practice supervisor or manager should decide next steps and the type of response required. The DSL will follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL will press for re-consideration using the Cumberland SCP Escalation Policy to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

All adults in school have a shared responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

Cumberland Children Advice & Support Service (CASS)

Tel: 0333 240 1727

Email: hub@cumberland.gov.uk (please ensure that e mails sent to this address are password protected or sent via other secure means).

The service enables callers to outline their concerns and the CASS will give advice and, if necessary, undertake an assessment of need. KCSiE provides two flowcharts of actions to be taken by the school and other agencies where there are concerns about a child.

This service is available any time, day or night

Staff must be aware that:

- it is not the responsibility of teachers, other staff or volunteers to investigate suspected cases of abuse;
- they should not take any action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by the setting and the Cumberland SCP;
- they cannot promise a child complete confidentiality. Instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

Listening to children

Experience and consultation with children show that a child will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust and they feel comfortable with. This will not necessarily be a teacher. It is therefore essential that all staff and volunteers in a school or establishment know how to respond sensitively to a child's concerns, who to approach for advice about them, and the importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality.

GOV.UK statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children describes what children have said that they need:

- **Vigilance**: to have adults notice when things are troubling them.
- **Understanding and action**: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have

that understanding acted upon.

- **Stability**: to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect**: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.
- **Information and engagement**: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation**: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
- **Support**: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy**: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.
- **Protection**: to be protected against all forms of abuse, exploitation and discrimination and, if a refugee, the right to special protection and help.

Further information is available in the DfE statutory guidance 'Listening to and involving children and young people'.

Any member of staff or volunteer who is approached by a child wanting to talk will listen positively and reassure the child. School staff will work with the child and their families collaboratively when deciding how to support the child's needs. Special provision will be put in place to support dialogue with children who may not be able to verbally convey their concerns, have communication difficulties, unaccompanied children, refugees and those children who are victims of modern slavery and/or trafficking and those who do not speak English or for whom English is not their first language. Staff will record the discussion (using an interpreter if necessary) with the pupil as soon as possible and act in accordance with the school's child protection procedures.

If a child chooses to disclose/report, the member of staff or other adult in the school **WILL**:

- be accessible and receptive;
- listen carefully and uncritically at the child's pace;
- take what is said seriously;
- reassure the child that they are right to tell;
- tell the child that this information must be passed on;
- make a careful record of what was said.

Staff or other adults will **NEVER**:

- take photographs or examine an injury;
- investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse – never ask leading questions;
- make promises to children about confidentiality or keeping 'secrets';
- assume that someone else will take the necessary action;
- jump to conclusions or react with shock, anger or horror;
- speculate or accuse anybody;
- confront another person (adult or child) allegedly involved;
- offer opinions about what is being said or about the person/s allegedly involved;
- forget to record what has been said;
- fail to pass the information on to the correct person;
- ask a child to sign a written copy of the report.

Vulnerable groups: For children with communication/language difficulties or who use alternative/ augmented communication systems, staff and other adults may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children. In some cases, it may be appropriate to seek the services of a professional interpreter.

6. Induction and training

All school-based staff including the Head teacher (where he/she is not the DSL) are required to undertake an appropriate level of safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training in online safety which, amongst other things, will include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring (see school Online Safety Policy and

procedures for more information). This training, which will be in line with advice from the safeguarding partners, will be updated regularly.

All practitioners in our EYFS provision are trained on induction in line with the criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS statutory framework for group and school based providers. We will consider using the DfE online safeguarding training package particularly aimed at EYFS practitioners. Training must be renewed **every two years.** We will consider whether any staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period to help maintain basic skills and keep up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting.

In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (including online safety) (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings/briefings etc.), as required, but at least annually.

Appropriate training and regular updates will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity.

Training is organised by the DSL in line with Cumberland SCP training guidance.

All staff have undertaken whole school Safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years in accordance with recommendations issued by the Cumbria SCPs and updated on a regular basis, at least annually, by the DSL.

All regular volunteers working in 'Regulated Activity' are provided with a safeguarding literature on induction. (See Induction checklist for more information) and the procedures to follow should a child go missing from school or home/care.

We will ensure that regular staff appraisals are carried out to identify any training needs, and secure opportunities for continued professional development for staff. We will support our staff to improve their qualification levels wherever possible.

The nominated Governor will receive safeguarding training from a strategic perspective which will be updated regularly, to be disseminated to the rest of the Governing Body.

The School Leadership Team will ensure the DSL and the Deputy DSL attend the required safeguarding training when they first take up the role which will provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role effectively. The training will be updated every two years. In addition to formal training, as set out above, their knowledge and skills will be updated, (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSL's, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Both the DSL and the Deputy have attended the required level of training as recommended by the Cumberland SCP - Training. This training will be updated in line with recommended good practice.

The DSL will ensure that all new staff, volunteers and other adults are appropriately inducted as regards the school's internal safeguarding procedures, including those for Child Protection, communication lines and whistleblowing. This will also be a regular agenda item at staff meetings.

The DSL and Head teacher (if not one and the same) will provide an annual report to the Governing Body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date registers of who has been trained and to what level. This, along with Induction training and other safeguarding training (including health and safety related training) will be included in the school staff Training Plan.

7. Communication

We will ensure that staff have sufficient understanding and use of the English language to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care. We will ensure we are able to keep records in English, to liaise with other agencies in English, to summon emergency help, and to understand instructions such as those for the safety of medicines.

8. Record keeping

Staff will record any welfare concern that they have about a child on CPOms, with a body map (where injuries have been observed) to be passed to the DSL. A model Child Report/Concern Record is available from the KAHub. Records must be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event and must be

signed and dated and any record will be written in the author's own words. Under no circumstances will generative Artificial Intelligence be used to create a Child Protection record either on an internal system or a recording system such as CPOMS. It is good practice to also note the day of the week. Staff must be aware that their records might have to be used as evidence in court and must therefore be mindful of the need to distinguish fact from opinion. However, staff must not attempt to investigate a situation themselves. No staff member may ask another colleague to record an incident on their behalf for any reason.

Child protection records are kept centrally and securely by the DSL and are shared on a 'need to know' basis only. They will be held separate from the child's education record. A separate child protection record will be made for each individual child, particularly where they are members of the same family with family concerns copied for each file. A chronology must be recorded in the file with the final entry being the date the child left the school or the date the file was transferred to a receiving school.

Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

A record will be made of all incidents where pupils have expressed racist (faith-based or race-based discrimination), homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying, extremist or radical views which will be monitored at a senior level. The Incident reporting module of the KA Hub can be used for this purpose.

When forwarding files to a receiving school, a chronology of the information, a record of the date of transfer and date of confirmation of receipt by the next school will be kept.

All child protection records will be forwarded (hand delivered) to a child's subsequent school under confidential and separate cover to the new DSL or Head teacher. Confidential files that must be posted (e.g. for out of County moves) are marked private and confidential and sent via the 'Special Delivery' postage route where its whereabouts at any time can be tracked. See section 2.5 above for details on retaining records of those pupils removed from school for Elective Home Education (EHE).

9. Safeguarding concerns or allegations against adults working with children

Sometimes allegations of inappropriate treatment of children are made against adults working in or on behalf of the school, rather than members of the child's family or other adults known to the child. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another adult **harming or posing a risk of harm to children** then this should be referred to the Head teacher. Allegations are those which relate to adults who are currently working in any school or college regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher or who is no longer teaching will be referred to the Police. Historical allegations of abuse will also be referred to the Police. Such allegations are dealt with in accordance with specific procedures published on the Cumberland SCP website - Allegations against staff or volunteers and Part four of 'KCSiE' – Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors.

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another adult that **does not** meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school low-level concerns procedures (see section 10 below) and the school staff Code of Conduct.

If an allegation is made against a governor, the school will follow their own local procedures. Where an allegation is substantiated, we will follow the procedures to consider removing them from office.

Cumberland SCP has produced a 'Summary of allegations management procedures' flowchart. A copy of this flowchart is provided to all individuals working in school and to new starters as part of their Induction.

The member of staff to whom the concern or allegation is reported will:

- treat the matter seriously;
- ensure that, where necessary, the child receives appropriate medical attention;
- make a written record of the information using the child's/parent's own words, including when the alleged incident took place; who was present; and what happened;
- sign and date the written record;

- report the matter immediately to the Head teacher or, in her absence, the Chair of Governors. Where the Head teacher is the subject of a concern or allegation this should be referred to the Chair of Governors. In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting an allegation to the Head teacher, the concern or allegation will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO – contact details below). In all instances, the most senior person (Head teacher or Chair of Governors) will be the allocated the role of 'Case Manager'. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

- **Looking after the welfare of the child** - the DSL (or a deputy) is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the CASS.
- **Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation** - the Case Manager will discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

When dealing with allegations, we will:

- apply common sense and judgement;
- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently; and,
- provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.

Initial action by the Case Manager

Before contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the Case Manager will conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts and to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future Police investigation.

Following the completion of basic enquiries, the Case Manager will discuss the concern or allegation with the LADO and within **1 working day** of the concern being identified. The purpose of an initial discussion is for the LADO and the Case Manager to consider the nature, content and context of the concern or allegation and agree a course of action. To inform the initial course of action, the following may be required:

- written details of the concern or allegation - signed and dated by the person receiving the initial concern or allegation report;
- any other information and names of any potential witnesses, surveillance systems etc.;
- a chronology of significant events;
- information already known about those involved, including previous history, other concerns or allegations made by the child or family and the individual's current contact with children;
- checks on any historic incident(s) or logbooks.

There may be situations when the Case Manager will want to involve the Police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the Case Manager should discuss the concern or allegation with the LADO to help determine whether Police involvement is necessary.

To report a concern in writing to the LADO, the SCP notification form must be used. Cumberland SCP – 'LADO - Position of Trust referral'.

Completed forms must be sent to the LADO using any of the following methods:

(Please note: if sending by email the document must be password protected)

- **Email:** Cumberland LADO (lado@cumberland.gov.uk).
- **Post:** LADO, Cumbria House, 117 Botchergate, Carlisle CA1 1RD (Cumberland)

Note: if you are worried that a child is at **risk of actual or likely significant harm,** contact the Cumberland Children Advice & Support Service (CASS) on **0333 240 1727**.

To speak to a LADO for advice:

Phone: 0300 303 3892 (Cumberland Council)

Allegations are managed in accordance with the Cumberland SCP procedures.

The Case Manager will contact the LADO if an allegation is made against a member of staff or other adults working in or on behalf of the school where their actions may have met the 'harm threshold' and the individual is alleged to have:

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

The advice of the LADO can also be sought if there is uncertainty as to whether a referral should be made or for example there are concerns about the staff member's conduct outside work which may raise concerns about their suitability to work with children, this is known as transferrable risk.

When to inform the individual of the allegation will be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis with guidance as required from the LADO, and, if appropriate, the CASS and the Police. The Case Manager will inform the accused person about the concern or allegation as soon as possible after consulting with the LADO. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or Police or the CASS services need to be involved, the Case Manager will not do that until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused.

The Case Manager will appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the concern or allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual.

The welfare of a child is paramount, and this is the prime concern in terms of investigating an allegation against a person in a position of trust. However, when an allegation or safeguarding concern is being investigated it is likely to be a very stressful experience for the adult subject of the investigation, and potentially for their family members. We will offer appropriate welfare support at such a time and recognise the sensitivity of the situation. Information is confidential and will not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

Parents of a child or children involved will be told about the concern or allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or Police or the CASS services need to be involved, the Case Manager will not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed. Parents will also be kept informed about the progress of the case, only in relation to their child – no information can be shared regarding the staff member and informed of the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome (in confidence) of any disciplinary process.

Parents will also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any concern or allegation made against teachers or other staff whilst investigations are ongoing. Where parents wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they will be advised to seek legal advice.

Initial consideration by the Case Manager and LA appointed Designated Officer (LADO)

Schools, as employers have a duty of care to their employees. Where the school is not the employer of an individual, they still have a responsibility to ensure concerns or allegations are dealt with appropriately and that they liaise with relevant parties. It is essential that any allegation of abuse in a school is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time, supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The LADO will establish, in discussion with the Case Manager that the allegation is within the scope of the Cumberland SCP and may require further investigation. There may be up to 3 strands considered as part of this process and the discussion will centre upon whether there is a need for:

- a Police investigation because a crime has or may have been committed;
- enquiries and assessment by the CASS to determine if services or emergency actions are required;
- consideration by the employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

If agreement is reached that the criteria for action by the Police or Children's Services has been established, the LADO will contact the CASS to ensure a formal 'strategy meeting' is set up involving the CASS and the

Police. Where the Police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the Police to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the employer's disciplinary process. If only the last criterion is met the LADO will provide advice to the Case Manager on the subsequent management of the case to a satisfactory conclusion within the framework of the school's procedures for discipline and conduct.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the Police, the CASS, the school or a combination of these.

Suspension

Suspension will never be an automatic step for staff subject to allegations; each case will be dealt with on its merits taking into consideration factors such as the seriousness of the allegation, the potential risks to children and whether it is possible to investigate the allegation whilst the person is still at work. The strategy meeting will make a recommendation to the setting if one is required but the ultimate decision rests with the Case Manager. The decision to suspend will be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment about whether the person poses a risk of harm to children. All options to avoid suspension will be considered prior to taking that step.

The decision on **suspension/transfer to alternative duties** of the staff member subject to the allegation is the responsibility of the Case Manager having consulted with their HR adviser and the LADO. School leaders will ensure that they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide them with a named contact if they are suspended.

Additional information on suspension or those subject to a Secretary of State interim Prohibition Order is available in Part four of 'KCSIE'.

If the Case Manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, those concerns will be reported to the LADO, the CASS or the Police as required.

Subsequent actions

The detailed procedures that need to follow this initial consideration are available on the Cumberland SCP website. The Case Manager is expected to keep the LADO advised of progress especially where it has been agreed that the matter should be dealt with within the framework of the school's disciplinary process (see above).

The following definitions will be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated**: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious**: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation;
- **False**: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated**: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence; or
- **Unfounded**: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

A referral must also be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when concerns are raised that a person has caused harm or poses a future risk of harm to children/vulnerable adults – See Section 24 for further details. If a member of staff or a volunteer is removed or dismissed because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or the school would have done so if the individual had not left, the Disclosure and Barring Service must be informed. DBS barring referral guidance.

The school will also consider whether a referral to the Teaching Regulation Authority (TRA) is appropriate where we dismiss or cease to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first.

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records and those allegations which were proved to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in an employer reference. However, for all other allegations we will hold a clear and comprehensive summary of

the allegation and how it was followed up and resolved. This will enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate.

All staff will be made aware that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. When in doubt – consult.

Resignations and settlement agreements

If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with Part four of the DfE guidance KCSiE.

'Settlement or compromise agreements' will not be used in cases of refusal to cooperate or resign before the person's notice period expires. Such an agreement will not prevent a thorough Police investigation where that is deemed appropriate.

Record keeping

We have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse which will be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation report if that is longer.

Details of allegations following investigation that are found to have been malicious or false will be removed from personnel records unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information. For all other allegations i.e. substantiated, unfounded and unsubstantiated, the following information will be kept on the file of the person accused:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, and decisions reached, and the outcome i.e. substantiated, unfounded or unsubstantiated;
- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by the CASS or the Police; and,
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

For more detailed guidance on how to respond to allegations against adults working in or on behalf of the school, please refer to the Cumberland SCP guidance Whistleblowing or raising concerns at work, Section 12 below and Part four of KCSiE.

9.1 Supply teachers, trainee teachers and all contracted staff

Whilst this school is not the employer of supply teachers, fee funded trainee teachers or other contracted staff, we will ensure that concerns or allegations (no matter how small) are dealt with properly. In no circumstances will we decide to cease to use supply/trainee teacher/contracted staff due to safeguarding concerns or allegations, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO. Where the individual is employed by an Agency or Agencies (where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools), the Governing body will discuss with the Agency/ies whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher concerned. The Agency or teacher training provider will be fully involved in the process which will usually be led by the school and the LADO. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency/teacher training provider are considered by the school during the investigation.

We will inform any supply agency or teacher training provider of our process for managing allegations, taking account of the agency's/provider's Policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers.

9.2 Non-recent allegations

Where an adult makes an allegation to a school that they were abused as a child, the individual will be advised to report the allegation to the Police. Non-recent allegations made by a child, will be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with the CASS and the Police. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

10. Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding we aim to promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

We believe that creating a culture in which **all** concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harm threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this will encourage an open and transparent culture; enable us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries.

A low-level concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school 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 harm threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

All low-level concerns about adults should be reported initially to the DSL/Head teacher[2]. Where the concern relates to the Head teacher this should be referred to the Chair of Governors. In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head teacher, the concern should be referred to the LADO - see Section 9 above for contact details.

Further information on low-level concerns, examples and record keeping can be found in the school Staff Code of Conduct.

10.1 Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the Head teacher will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern (unless it has been raised anonymously), to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The rationale for any action taken and the decisions which led to the action will be recorded. A flowchart outlining the possible response to managing low-level concerns is available via the KAHub.

Low-level concerns which are shared about other adults working in or on behalf of the school will, where relevant, be notified to their employer/National Governing Body, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

11. Managing allegations against other pupils (child on child abuse)

In all cases of reported alleged HSB or child on child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment, reference will be made to Part five of KCSiE.

We have a zero tolerance approach to sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, sexual violence and sexual harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict. These behaviours are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All staff have been made aware that even if there are no reports in our school, it does not mean it is not happening – it may be the case that abuse is just not being reported. It is essential that all victims are reassured, being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. When staff have any concerns regarding any form of child on child abuse, they must speak to the DSL (or a deputy).

We believe that all children have a right to attend the School and learn in a safe environment. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will generally be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy and procedures. It is not enough to respond

[2] Where the school determines that low-level concerns should be shared initially with the DSL, then the DSL **must** inform the Head teacher of the concern in a timely fashion according to the nature of each particular low-level concern

to incidents as they arise and we strive to create an environment that actively discourages abuse and challenges the attitudes which underlie it. The school has a Policy which includes bullying, and sexual and racial harassment.

All staff are made aware that child on child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator, is preventable and that training will be given in recognising behaviours and indicators of risk early. Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying);
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include and online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration with an object or part of a person's body and sexual assault (this may include and online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- sexual physical harassment such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras, lifting up skirts,
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- upskirting (which is a criminal offence);
- incidents involving consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes;
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours and not challenging them risks normalising them. See Part five and Annex A of KCSiE for further information.

We will ensure that pupils are aware of the NSPCC dedicated helpline (report abuse in education – **0800 136 663**) for children who have experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. Childline/IWF provides a free tool Report Remove for children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared on line.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions relating to HSB or child on child abuse will be recorded (written or electronic).

Decisions about what to do should a case of child on child abuse including HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment become evident will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration:

- the wishes of the victim (which are paramount) in terms of how they want to proceed;
- the nature of the alleged incident – might a crime have been committed and/or has HSB been displayed?
- the ages of the children involved (a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity);
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children such as differences in age, maturity or social status. Does the victim have a disability, learning difficulty or other health related issues?;
- whether it was a one-off alleged incident or a sustained pattern of abuse by the alleged perpetrator(s);
- the importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents;
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children or school staff; and,
- other related issues and wider contextual concerns, including any links to child sexual, criminal or financial exploitation.

11.1 Safeguarding concerns or allegations

We recognise that children can abuse other children, and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. There are different forms of child on child abuse, but we recognise that abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "boys being boys" or "part of growing up". Downplaying such behaviour can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, and

an unsafe environment, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. Staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. We will not dismiss abusive behaviour between children as 'normal' and our thresholds for investigating claims and concerns or allegations are the same as for any other type of abuse. Although it is generally recognised that for some (but not all) forms of child on child abuse it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, we consider all child on child abuse to be unacceptable and will take any concerns or allegations seriously. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are also more likely to be abused than their peers.

Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability or health condition without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges; and,
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the DSL (or a deputy) and the SENCo.

We are also aware that our staff can be victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and have arrangements in place to protect our staff and other adults from such abuse, including clear reporting and support mechanisms. We will take account of the guidance issued by the DfE 'Preventing and tackling the bullying and harassment of school staff' when such incidents are identified or brought to the attention of the Head teacher.

Occasionally, allegations may be made against children by others in the school, which are of a child protection nature. Child protection issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a child protection allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

The concern or allegation:

- is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil;
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence;
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the school;
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this pupil;
- indicates that children outside the school may be affected by this pupil.

Examples of child on child abuse could include:

Physical abuse

- violence, particularly pre-planned such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- forcing others to use drugs or alcohol;

Emotional abuse/sexual harassment

- blackmail or extortion;
- threats, intimidation, defamation and taunting;
- online sexual harassment including sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media), coercing others into making or sharing images of themselves or performing acts they are not comfortable with online;
- bullying (including cyberbullying, racism, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), racial or sexual harassment (sexual comments, telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names) or other imbalance of power;

- physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes etc. This may cross the line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim;
- stalking.

Sexual abuse

- sexual violence such as rape, acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object and sexual assault (sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour). These may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent;
- indecent exposure, indecent touching, rape or sexual assault;
- forcing others to watch pornography or consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes (including those generated using AI) via the internet or other mobile device;
- sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexual comments and messages, including on social media
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence).

Sexual exploitation

- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with.
- making or creating images or videoing other children performing indecent acts.

In some situations, older pupils may attempt to recruit younger pupils using any or all the above methods. Children suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other children under threat of violence.

11.2 Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. We use the umbrella term "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). HSB can be an indicator that a child is or has experienced abuse. It is likely that their natural healthy sexual development has been disrupted in some way. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. The School will use the NSPCC Hackett Sexualised Behaviour Continuum alongside the knowledge/context of the child to categorise and determine the correct response. Our DSL has a good understanding of HSB and all reports will be made to the DSL and/or deputy.

Response to harmful sexual behaviour by staff should be effective and proportionate. Staff will use the NSPCC SDSE method (see below) when responding to an incident:



Stop – move their hand away; distraction; change the environment

Define – (specifically) the unwanted behaviour

State – Our private parts are private (link pantosaurus and school rules)

Enforce – Consequences should not shame or humiliate the child

Additional information on HSB is available from the Contextual Safeguarding Network, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation HSB Toolkit (StopItNow) and the NSPCC 'Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) framework and audit'. Training is available for staff from the NSPCC (Understanding, responding to and preventing HSB).

11.3 Minimising the risk of child on child safeguarding concerns

On occasion, some children may present a safeguarding risk to other children. The school may well be informed by the relevant agency (either Police or the CASS) that the child raises safeguarding concerns. These children will need an individual Behaviour (or risk) Management Plan to ensure that other children are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations.

Children are encouraged to report HSB and child on child abuse, and the issue is discussed as part of RSHE curriculum to the extent that all children are made aware of what behaviour is unacceptable and to enable all children to have the confidence to report issues which may be worrying or concerning to them.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously (regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward) and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will explain to children in a way that avoids alarming or distressing them that the law is in place to protect children rather than criminalise them.

A flowchart providing guidance on how to respond to a report of HSB, sexual violence and/or sexual harassment is available from the KAHub.

11.4 Possible actions in response to a concern or allegation against a pupil

We will ensure that systems are put in place (promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse. Ultimately, any decisions or actions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL taking a lead role and, where necessary, supported by other agencies. Reference may be made to the Farrer & Co guidance 'Addressing child-on-child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges'.

Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children involved/impacted including siblings.

Consideration will also be given to the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.

We will do all we reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved. We will also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

We will refer to further information on dealing with and responding to a concern or allegation against a pupil outlined in KCSiE **Part five: child on child sexual harassment and sexual violence.**

11.5 Risk assessment

When there has been a report of HSB or sexual violence, the DSL (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment (including online), the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment for a report of HSB or sexual violence should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other victims;
- the alleged perpetrator(s);
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms; and,
- the time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer.

Risk assessments must be recorded (paper or electronic) and kept under review. At all times, the school should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe. In relation to sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by other agencies will be required.

11.6 Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation needs help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to the CASS may be appropriate.

If a report is proven to be deliberately false or malicious, we will consider any disciplinary action against the individual in line with our school Behaviour Policy and procedures.

11.7 Working with parents and carers

The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents when there has been a report of HSB or sexual violence (this **might** not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk. We will carefully consider what information we provide to the respective parents about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, the CASS and/or the Police will have a very clear view and as such we will take advice from the relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

Wherever necessary, we will meet with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents to discuss any support required and any arrangements put in place that impact either party. Other agencies may be asked to attend but this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

12. Whistleblowing

Staff must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Adults working in or on behalf of the school may be the first to recognise that something is wrong. Individual feeling of disloyalty to others, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk as a result of poor or unsafe practice in the school. It is often the most vulnerable child who is targeted. These children need adults they can trust to safeguard their welfare.

DON'T THINK WHAT IF I'M WRONG - THINK WHAT IF I'M RIGHT!

Reasons for whistleblowing:

- Everyone has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour.
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening.
- To protect or reduce risks to others.
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself.

What stops people from whistleblowing?

- Fear of starting a chain of events which spirals out of control.
- Disrupting the work or project.
- Fear of getting it wrong.
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers.
- Fear of not being believed.

How to raise a concern:

- Voice concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as possible. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken.
- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is causing concern and why.
- Approach the Head teacher or Senior Manager.
- If the concern is related to the Head teacher/Principal, the LADO or Chair of Governors should be contacted or, if it is felt that the issue needs to be reported to someone outside the school, contact the CASS.
- Staff and other adults should ensure they get a satisfactory response - don't let matters rest. If an individual feels their genuine concerns are not being addressed, the issue should be referred to the CASS.
- Ideally, concerns should be put in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places wherever possible.
- **An individual is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.**

What happens next?

- The individual reporting the concerns will be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.

- The employer has a responsibility to protect individual members of staff from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against an individual if the concern proves to be unsubstantiated, unfounded or false and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence. The LADO and Case Manager should consider whether the child and/or the person who made the allegation needs help or may have been abused by someone else.

Self-reporting:

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so professional and personal support can be offered. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Further advice and support:

It is recognised that whistleblowing can be difficult and stressful. Advice and support is available from senior managers, HR provider and/or your professional or trade union.

Where an individual feels unable to raise an issue with the Head teacher or DSL, the NSPCC have a whistleblowing advice line for professionals who have concerns over how child protection issues are being handled in either their or another organisation. Call 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

"Absolutely without fail - challenge poor practice or performance. If you ignore or collude with poor practice it makes it harder to sound the alarm when things go wrong" – Barnardos).

The school has Whistleblowing procedures, a copy of which is held in the school office.

13. Supporting children and young people with medical conditions

We have, and implement, a Policy and procedures on supporting children and young people with medical conditions and an Allergy Safety Policy and procedures. This includes systems for obtaining information about a child's medical needs and for keeping this information up to date. Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Unless in an emergency when staff have received appropriate training, medicines will not usually be administered unless they have been prescribed for a child by a GP, dentist, nurse or pharmacist (medicines containing aspirin will only be given if prescribed by a GP).

Unless in an emergency, medicine (both prescription and non-prescription) will only be administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent. We keep a written record each time a medicine is administered to a child, and, in the case of emergency pain-relief, where prior consent has been obtained, inform the child's parents on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

14. Alternative provision

Where the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will ensure that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. We will obtain written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the AP i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff. This includes written confirmation that the AP will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that we (the commissioning school) can assure ourselves that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

So that we always know where a child is based during school hours we will hold records of the address of the AP and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. We will regularly review the AP placements made (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, we will immediately review the placement, and terminate, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

15. Working with other agencies

The School recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will try to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals (in discussion with parents) as appropriate. Information on the Early Help Assessment process is available via the Cumberland SCP website .

Schools are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and will pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies, which we will support in undertaking their roles. We may have a crucial role in supporting the child whilst investigations and assessments take place.

We recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings.

16. Partnership with parents

The school shares a purpose with parents to educate, keep children safe from harm and to have their welfare promoted. We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly.

We ensure that all parents are treated with empathy, respect, dignity and courtesy.

While collaborative relationships between the school and parents are important, the wishes and feelings of the child and what is in their best interest remain central to decision-making. The school will, in most circumstances, endeavour to discuss all concerns about their children with parents. There may, however, be circumstances when the school will share concerns or information with the CASS, health partners or agencies and/or the Police without parental knowledge. The school will, of course, always aim to maintain a positive relationship with all parents and will take account of the families' background, ethnicity, religion, financial situation, ability, education, sex, ages and sexual orientation, and potential barriers these create in seeking and accessing help and support. As well as being available on the school website, this Child Protection Policy and procedures is available on request.

Where appropriate, material provided to children, parents and families will be made accessible and translated into their first language if necessary.

The school and other practitioners will empower parents to participate in decision-making to help, support and protect children by:

- creating a culture of "no surprises", for example, making parents and carers aware of who will attend meetings and discussions, if the child will be invited to participate and the format of the meeting or discussion;
- explaining that parents can bring a family member, a friend or supporter to meetings;
- giving parents adequate preparation at every stage, relevant information, a safe and appropriate environment for participation and suitable access arrangements;
- signposting parents to sources of help and support available locally or through the local authority;
- helping parents to understand what the issues are and how these impact on the child, what decisions could be made, what changes need to be made, why and how, timescales and possible outcomes.

17. Professional confidentiality and information sharing

Safeguarding and child protection information is confidential and personal. Other than the agreed communication lines in school, it is for the DSL(s) to decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, how and when. Further guidance on Information Sharing can be found in the DfE document Data protection: a toolkit for schools (Sharing Personal Data) and the DfE statutory information sharing duty guidance 'Information Sharing Duty: Statutory guidance for safeguarding organisations and their practitioners'.

Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical to keep a child or children safe. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. Sharing information about any adults with whom that child has contact, which may impact the child's safety or welfare, is also critical.

We will be particularly alert to the importance of sharing information when a child moves from one local authority into another, due to the risk that knowledge pertinent to keeping a child safe could be lost.

We are aware that among other obligations, data protection laws place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information we hold safe and secure.

Data protection laws do not prevent, or limit, the sharing, or withholding, of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. If in doubt, staff should speak to the DSL. Information which is sensitive and personal will be treated as 'special category personal data'. Legal and secure information sharing between schools, the CASS and other agencies is essential.

The 'Information Sharing duty' is a legal duty. It **requires** schools or individuals who hold information relevant to safeguarding or promoting a child's welfare to share it, if doing so may help another relevant person or agency covered by the duty to:

- assess a child's needs;
- make a decision;
- provide support or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child, including when a child potentially poses a risk to others,

There is no threshold that must be met first. This duty includes Early Help or Family Help referrals, where schools **must** share relevant information they hold, even where the family does not agree, because consent from the parent is no longer needed. Families can still choose whether to take up any support offered.

The information to be shared may be about a child, or another named individual connected to a child. The duty applies to both children with known needs and those with needs being identified for the first time.

Professional judgement should be used to ensure that the information shared is focused and proportionate. This may include summarising or omitting information which is not necessary for safeguarding purposes. But care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk. The statutory information sharing duty, is intended to give staff greater confidence to share information appropriately and in a timely way to safeguard children. Responding to another agency's request now forms part if the legal duty.

As with all data sharing, appropriate organisational and technical safeguards will be in place and we will fully record the rationale for any decisions made.

Under data protection laws, schools are permitted to withhold pupils' personal data where, for example, a child is in a refuge or other form of emergency accommodation and to provide the information would place a child at risk.

All staff are made aware that they cannot keep 'secrets' and absolute confidentiality with children, and that if a child reports abuse or gives information that suggests they may be at risk, this **must** be passed on to the DSL as soon as possible. The child should be told who their report will be shared with and what will happen next. If the child does not give their consent to share information, staff must still share it with advice sought from the DSL in all cases. Consideration will be given to the 'Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines' in situations where there may be a need for staff to balance listening to the child's wishes and the responsibility to keep them safe. Where this situation arises, the member of staff **must** speak to the DSL for further advice.

18. Curriculum and staying safe

Schools play an essential role in helping children to understand what appropriate child and adult behaviour is; what is 'safe'; what constitutes a healthy relationship both online and offline; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.

We will ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online and recognise that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with SEND.

We will include relevant safeguarding topics as part of our compulsory Health, Relationships, and Sex Education curriculum. The DfE has published statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

We will register with and access the resources available from Pol-Ed which supports schools in delivering expertly planned lessons designed to develop a deep awareness of risks, citizenship and the law such as sexual violence and harassment; child on child abuse; and the perception that children have of the Police.

We recognise that we play a crucial role in preventative education and we will create a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, faith-based prejudice and sexual violence/harassment. We have a clear set of values and standards upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life and underpinned by the school's Behaviour Policy and pastoral support system which is reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. See DfE 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health' guidance.

The School will use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others. Systems have been established to support children to talk to a range of staff when they are in difficulty and to raise comments, complaints and feedback about their school experience and any other external issues which affect their wellbeing. Records will be kept of reported incidents in line with guidance.

We encourage the safe use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our pupils both during school events and those we arrange which form part of an off-site visit. We will, however, positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who are invited by the school staff, by pupils or form part of an off-site visit to ensure that we do not unwittingly use people or organisations that contradict each other with their messages or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to, the school's values and ethos. Where lessons are delivered by external agencies we will agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor. Where we are using external speakers at either on or off-site events, we will refer to the Educateagainsthate guidance on the use of external speakers.

Our school will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from people or organisations. We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage pupils to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to be able to actively engage with them in informed debate, and we may use external agencies or speakers to facilitate and support this.

19. Supervision and support

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for a child's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL or a deputy DSL.

All newly qualified teachers and classroom assistants have a mentor or co-ordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection; however, all concerns MUST be reported to the DSL without delay.

The DSL can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support.

We will put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the staff member/volunteer and promotes the interests of children. Our supervision arrangements foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

The key functions of supervision are:

Performance management

- Ensure that performance and practice, including safeguarding, is competent, accountable and soundly based in research and practice knowledge.
- Ensure that safeguarding children practice is consistent with the Cumberland SCP and organisational procedures.
- Ensure that practitioners fully understand their roles, and responsibilities and the scope of their

professional discretion and authority.

- To provide reflective space to analyse ongoing work and specific incidents, to assess risk and need and to provide an important check and balance on decision making and planning.

Professional development

- Ensure that professional development needs, including safeguarding practice are considered and supported.

Personal support

- To provide reflective space for the supervisee to discuss and work through the personal impact of their role and responsibilities. This should include support to address the emotional impact of the work where required.

Good supervision involves a balance between all three elements, not always within one session, but certainly over the entire supervision process.

20. Safe working practice

Staff and other adults are required to work within clear Guidelines on Safe Working Practice, this Child Protection Policy and procedures, the Staff Behaviour Policy/Staff Code of Conduct and the school's ICT Staff Acceptable Use Agreement. The latter includes amongst other things, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

A child may make an allegation against a member of staff or other adult in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all school staff and other adults must take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations.

It is not realistic to suggest that staff should never touch pupils and they, and other staff in schools, have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. Although there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools to use reasonable force, restrictive intervention will only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events will be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff and other adults working in or on behalf of the school are aware of the school's Behaviour Policy and procedures, and any restrictive interventions must be in line with that agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training will be provided. Full advice and guidance can be found in the DfE document Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools.

21. Online safety

The use of new technologies presents challenges and risks to children both inside and outside of school and technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation; online hoaxes and challenges – technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

The School will ensure a comprehensive curriculum response to enable all pupils to learn about and manage the associated risks effectively and will support parents and the school community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the needs of keeping children safe online. Reference will be made to the DfE advice Teaching online safety in schools. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving but can be categorised into four areas of risk: **content; contact; conduct and commerce.** Detailed information on these risk areas can be found in the school's Online Safety Policy and procedures.

Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse e.g. being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, peer pressure, commercial advertising such as online gambling and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes, we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

Our Online Safety Policy and procedures also includes information on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Staff are particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (email; mobile phones; texting; social network sites) and must familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in the school Code of Conduct for staff and other adults and the school's Online Safety Acceptable Use Agreement.

In relation to pupils and their use of mobile devices on the school site, we are a mobile-free environment and pupils do not have access to their mobile phones by default including throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. We will, however, take exceptional circumstances into account and these will be considered individually. Our Policy on the 'Use of mobile phones' is published on the school website and is included in our Behaviour Policy.

21.1 Managing online filtering and monitoring

We recognise that we are in a position to provide a safe environment for children and others to learn and work, including when online. The Governors have an overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and a role in ensuring that the DfE filtering and monitoring standards are being met. Others in the school are responsible for procuring filtering and monitoring systems, documenting decisions on what is blocked or allowed and why; reviewing the effectiveness of the provision and overseeing reports. SLT are also responsible for ensuring that **all** staff understand their role; are appropriately trained; follow policies, processes and procedures and act on reports and concerns in a timely manner. A review of the effectiveness of our filtering and monitoring systems will be carried out at least once every academic year.

We will work closely with our IT providers to meet the needs of the school. Further guidance and information on how the school are meeting the DfE Filtering and monitoring standards can be found in the school Online Safety Policy and Procedures, a copy of which is available on request from the school office.

To minimise the risks to our children we will ensure that we have appropriate and reasonable security filters and monitoring systems in place. These filters and systems will, in part, be informed by our 'Prevent' risk assessment and a further assessment of risks.

21.2 Cyber crime

The school has a cyber security and resilience strategy in place along with a cyber-response plan in order to ensure that procedures and processes are in place to, at the outset, reduce the risk of a cyber-attack on the school's IT system and to manage any adverse breaches of the schools IT system. A copy of this strategy and plan are available from the school on request. Our school makes use of the DfE 'Cyber security standards for schools' to assist us to improve our resilience against cyber-attacks.

22. Complaints

The school has a Complaints Procedure available to parents, pupils and staff who wish to report concerns. This is published on the school website.

All reported complaints/concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process. Anything that constitutes a concern or allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific procedures for managing allegations against adults working in or on behalf of the school. See Section 9.

23. Safer recruitment, selection, pre-employment vetting and ongoing vigilance

The School aims to create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse or be a risk to the safety or welfare of children. The Governing Body will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of prospective adults working in or on behalf of the school, based on checks and evidence including: criminal record checks (DBS); barred list checks; Childcare Disqualification declaration (where relevant) and, in the case of those employed to teach, prohibition checks together with references and interview information.

The Governing Body and School Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within Part three of KCSiE and in the school Safer Recruitment, Selection and Pre-Employment Vetting Policy and procedures which includes the use of volunteers.

We will ensure that we have processes in place for continuous vigilance and ensure that staff understand the process and procedures to follow if they have a safeguarding concern about another staff member, agency staff, volunteer or contractor.

23.1 Childcare Act 2006/Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendments) Regulations 2018

The above legislation applies mainly to primary schools and those settings with early years pupils. However, as a basic principle, Governors and the Head teacher recognise that we must endeavour to ensure that we create a culture and environment where staff feel comfortable, where it is appropriate, to discuss matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace.

The Governors and the Head teacher would expect staff to discuss with them any situation where their relationships and associations both within and outside of the workplace (including online) may have implications for the safeguarding of children in school.

The legislation places separate and additional requirements on schools. At the point that an individual is convicted of, or cautioned for, a criminal offence of a specified type or category, or where they meet other disqualification criteria set out in the Regulations, the Act and Regulations disqualify staff from:

- providing early years childcare or later years childcare to children who have not attained the age of eight; or
- being directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

To ensure that those working in our School are not disqualified from working with the relevant pupils, we require that, prior to appointment, a 'relevant' individual completes a self-declaration form in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'.

Further information can be found in the school Safer Recruitment, Selection and Pre-Employment Vetting Policy and procedures.

24. Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The role of the DBS is to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children .

Schools have a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS where they remove an individual (paid staff and/or volunteers) from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left) and they believe the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or,
- satisfied the harm test[3] in relation to children; and/or,
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

Referrals will be made as soon as possible when an individual is removed from regulated activity. DBS barring referral guidance. The legal duty to refer applies equally in circumstances where an individual is redeployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity, they are suspended, dismissed or when they have resigned (or for a volunteer, ceased to volunteer at the school).

The advice of the LADO can also be sought if there is uncertainty as to whether a referral should be made or for example there are concerns about the staff member's conduct outside work which may raise concerns about their suitability to work with children. Further guidance can be found on the Cumberland SCP website – Allegations against staff .

25. Referral to Ofsted / CASS

Our Early Years Provision is not registered with Ofsted separately from the school so is not on the Early Years Register and therefore there is no legal requirement for us to notify Ofsted of any allegations of serious

[3] The harm test is explained on the Disclosure and Barring service website on GOV.UK

harm or abuse by those working with children or serious accidents, injuries or deaths which occur in relation to the childcare we provide.

However, in line with the DfE EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers we will notify the CASS of any allegation, serious accident, injury to, or death of, any child in our care.

26. The use of school premises by other organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another provider using the school premises, the Head teacher and Governing Body will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate Policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection (including inspecting these as needed) and that other providers have ensured that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll. We will also ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any lease or hire agreement as a condition of use and occupation of the premises. We will ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on safeguarding and child protection matters where appropriate. The DfE non-statutory guidance After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers details the safeguarding arrangements that we expect these providers to have in place.

Where we receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, we will follow the allegations procedures including, where necessary, informing the LADO.

The Governors/Head teacher will take appropriate action to ensure that the school is not hired out or otherwise let to external providers that use the premises to deliver messages of, or support for, extremist ideologies or radicalisation.

If assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises may be refused. See School Hire Arrangements for further information.

27. Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment

We will ensure that our premises are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises. We have, and implement, a Health and Safety Policy and procedures, which include identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment.

Risk Assessments inform staff practice and demonstrate how we are managing risks.

We will only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to us by the parent and will ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. We will take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.

The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site. Please refer to the DfE non-statutory guidance 'Controlling access to school premises'.

28. Summary

All staff will follow the procedures set out by the Cumberland SCP Multi-agency Threshold guidance and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to promote the wellbeing and safeguarding of our pupils.

29. Monitoring and review

Safeguarding including child protection is a regular agenda item at full Governors' meetings; Sub-Committee meetings and staff meetings giving the DSL the opportunity to update on staff/Governor training and any other relevant issues or changes.

REFERENCED STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The following statutory and non-statutory guidance was referenced in formulating this Child Protection Policy and procedures:

- Centre of expertise – Helping education professionals identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse or behaviour
- Charity Commission guidance: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees
- Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP)
- Cumberland Multi-agency Threshold guidance
- Cumberland SCP - Allegations against staff or volunteers
- Cumberland SCP - Fabricated or induced illness/Perplexing presentations
- Cumberland SCP - Children who go missing from home or care
- Cumberland SCP - Children who go missing throughout the school day
- Cumberland SCP - Child with disabilities/complex needs
- Cumberland SCP - Child Exploitation (including child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation)
- Cumberland SCP - Children from abroad, including victims of modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation
- Cumberland SCP - Domestic abuse
- DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)
- DfE What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – Advice for Practitioners
- DfE Maintained schools governance guide
- DfE Academy trust governance guide
- DfE EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers
- DfE Children missing education
- DfE Children who run away or go missing from home or care
- DfE Behaviour and discipline in schools: guide for governing bodies
- DfE Behaviour in schools: advice for Head teachers and school staff
- DfE Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners
- DfE Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools
- DfE Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies
- DfE Cyber bullying: advice for Head teachers and school staff
- DfE The Prevent Duty: an introduction for those in education with safeguarding responsibilities
- DfE Understanding and identifying radicalisation risk in your education setting
- DfE Managing the risk of radicalisation in your education setting
- DfE Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information
- DfE Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools – Advice for maintained schools
- DfE Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future
- DfE Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education
- DfE Teaching about relationships, sex and health
- DfE Teachers' Standards 2011
- DfE Teaching online safety in schools
- DfE Safeguarding and remote education
- DfE Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked: practice guidance
- DfE Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery
- DfE Mental health and behaviour in schools
- DfE The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- DfE Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care
- DfE Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school
- DfE Controlling access to school premises
- DfE Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 - Statutory guidance for schools
- DfE Information sharing Duty: Statutory guidance for safeguarding organisations and their practitioners
- DfE Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges
- DfE Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements

- DfE/DHSC Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children – Statutory guidance for LAs, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England
- Educate Against Hate
- EHRC – Technical guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: England
- Farrer and Co.: Addressing child-on-child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges
- Home Office Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence
- Home Office Controlling or coercive behaviour: statutory guidance framework
- Home Office Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines
- Home Office Child exploitation disruption toolkit
- Home Office Domestic Abuse Act: statutory guidance
- Home Office Domestic abuse: how to get help
- Home Office Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims
- Home Office Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales
- HM Government Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation
- ICO Guide to sharing information to safeguard children in the education sector in the UK
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation HSB Toolkit
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines (NG76) – Child abuse and neglect
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines (NG205) – Looked-after children and young people
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines (NG225) - Self-harm: assessment, management and preventing recurrence
- National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) When to call the Police – Guidance for schools and colleges
- NHS Every Mind Matters: Looking after a child or young person's mental health
- NSPCC Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines
- NSPCC Safeguarding children with SEND
- NSPCC Safeguarding d/deaf and disabled children and young people
- NSPCC Harmful sexual behaviour framework and audit
- NSPCC Protecting children from domestic abuse
- NSPCC The impact of coercive control on children and young people
- Ofsted's Inspecting safeguarding in schools
- Operation Encompass Resources for schools
- Papyrus Building Suicide-safer schools and colleges: A guide for teachers and staff
- Safer Recruitment Consortium Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings / Code of Conduct for Staff
- The Survivors Trust
- UKHSA/DfE Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school and college approach
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the governing board
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) - Sharing nudes and semi-nudes - Advice for education settings working with children and young people (including responding to an incident)