



CHOLLERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND AIDED FIRST SCHOOL

Be the best you can be through:

challenge, nurture, inspiration, respect, happiness, inclusion, in a safe, loving Christian family.

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Chollerton C of E First School fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This policy is one of a series in the school's safeguarding portfolio which includes for example:

- Staff behaviour/code of conduct
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force
- Behaviour *
- Personal and intimate care
- Tackling bullying
- Physical contact
- Safe working practice
- Whistleblowing
- SEND*
- Missing children
- Recruitment and selection (this document will reference your single central record which is statutory*)
- Staff discipline, grievance and disciplinary*
- Staff/pupil online communication
- Handheld devices
- Confidentiality and information sharing
- Children Missing Education
- Relationships & Sex Education*
- Complaints procedure*
- Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations against staff*
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school*
- Safeguarding arrangements for the hire of school premises
- School Exclusions

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DFE 2023

DFE Publications related to COVID 19 and the safeguarding of children

Ofsted inspectors will consider how well leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where children's and learner's welfare are promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children or learners who need extra help or who may be suffering or likely to suffer harm. Inspectors will evaluate how well statutory and other responsibilities are met and how well staff exercise their professional judgement in keeping children and learners safe. This policy contributes to the setting's commitment to all local and national requirements.

This policy is available on the school website and is included in the staff handbook/electronically, volunteers' handbook and made available to all visitors

Our core safeguarding principles and rationale are:

Chollerton C.E Aided First School believes that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and that they cannot learn unless they feel secure. We also believe that all staff working in school have a right to personal support and guidance concerning the protection of pupils.

- Staff will remain vigilant at all times creating the school's commitment to safeguarding.
- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
- safer children make more successful learners
- this policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review

Aims of Child Protection Policy

Our school aims to provide an environment in which

children feel secure and happy

their views and opinions are valued

children are encouraged to talk and know they will be listened to

Our school manages this by all staff being fully involved in the lives of all pupils, celebrating their successes, giving support when children feel upset or vulnerable, and giving a consistent approach to discipline.

Staff also provide positive role models and, through opportunities in assemblies, class discussions and more informal conversations, foster an open dialogue with pupils.

Policy Aims

- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice

For the purposes of this policy the following terminology is used:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering from or being at risk of suffering significant harm

Staff refers to all of those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time,

temporary or permanent in either a paid or voluntary capacity

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example, step parents, foster carers and adoptive parents

Child Protection Statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children/young people are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support and protection.

At Chollerton school pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities and the school is fully committed to this as part of the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff volunteers, visitors and governors and are consistent with those of the local safeguarding partnership (NSSP)

Policy Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the wellbeing of its pupils
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

Objectives

We provide support and guidance to pupils so that they have a range of appropriate adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are experiencing difficulties. Pupils have opportunities during lunch breaks, morning breaks and before school starts, to seek out appropriate adults if they need to discuss areas of concern privately.

The atmosphere and ethos of the school engenders a feeling of individual worth and easy access to adults who will give support.

We develop partnership/working relationships with parents/carers so that they can have an understanding of the school's statutory responsibility to ensure the welfare and safety of all children which might include referrals to Social Services in suspected child abuse cases.

This is not done in a general way but is addressed as and when the need arises.

We develop positive inter-agency links with Social and Health Services to ensure effective and appropriate referrals. These include the Health Visitor and the School Nurse.

We ensure that our curriculum provides opportunities to children to help them express feelings, be assertive, raise self-esteem, be safe, develop an awareness of potential risks to health and well-being and understand that they have an entitlement to say "no" on occasions which make them feel uncomfortable. This is done through Health Education during topics on Ourselves and Healthy Living using the "Health for Life" materials, E-Safety training and R.E. topics.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, and where appropriate other helpers and volunteers, receive guidance and training in child protection issues in order to ensure their vigilance in recognising abuse and appropriate procedures for dealing with it. To date, all members of teaching and non-teaching staff have been briefed on these procedures and have access to the Northumberland Council brochure entitled 'The Role for Schools in Implementing the Northumberland Child Protection Guidelines'.

The notes on responding to disclosure and important points to remember listed below will be followed in every instance of suspected child abuse.

The statutory guidance, **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**, is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and pupil referral units.

All staff have read, and **evidence** that they understand the content of Part One Annex A of this guidance and have all been issued with a copy. A record to confirm this is held on the School Computer

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 - Advice for practitioners this is non statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action *and copies are available at School*

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that **all school staff** are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) is HAZEL DAVEY

Name/email/telephone number 01434 681572

Hazel.Davey@chollerton.northumberland.sch.uk

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead(s) GLENDA GLENWRIGHT

Name/email/telephone number 01434 681572

Glenda.glenwright@chollerton.northumberland.sch.uk

The Governor with responsibility for safeguarding is James Ellison Chair of Gov's

Name/email address

The head teacher is Hazel Davey

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff

- is appropriately trained, receiving annual updates and face to face training provided by the safeguarding board every two years.

The designated person is enabled to participate fully in child protection conferences and understands procedures for reporting after conferences. The designated teacher's role is to ensure that locally established procedures are followed, and to act as a channel of communicating to the Social Services Department relevant concerns expressed by any member of the school staff, teaching and non-teaching, about individual children.

Responding to Disclosure

- Listen carefully to what the child is saying.
- Take seriously what the child is saying.
- Write down as soon as possible exactly what the child said.
- Tell your Designated Person as soon as possible.
- Make sure the child is safe, i.e. supported in school.
- Do tell the child it is not their fault.
- Do not panic.
- Do not immediately rush off to find someone else to listen.
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Keep the child informed of any action you are preparing to take where appropriate.
- Do not make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser.
- Do not ask detailed questions or press the child for more information.

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish

you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong

- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the **record of concern form** and hand it to the designated person
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying Parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care.

Referral to Children's Social Care

- **The DSL will make a referral to children's social care** if it is believed that a pupil **is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.**
- The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.
- The DSL should keep relevant staff informed about actions taken, they do not need to share all information but staff must be confident their concerns have been actioned.

We develop positive inter-agency links with Social and Health Services to ensure effective and appropriate referrals. These include the Health visitor and school nurse.

Confidentiality and Sharing Information

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated safeguarding lead, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR

Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely

- secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not routinely be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information, including Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour notifications will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information without consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the head teacher or DSL

Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead; this lead responsibility will not be delegated.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

Are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated safeguarding lead, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

If the DSL (or deputy) are not available, staff should contact a member of the leadership team to seek advice. Advice can also be sought from colleagues in the Schools' Safeguarding team (01670 622720) or One Call, the Local Authority's single point of access on 01670 536400

The Governing Body:

Ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures
- has a staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, which is reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher and allegations against other children

- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head teacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is updated at least annually and will receive regular updates. The DSL receives face to face refresher training at two-yearly intervals and accesses an annual update in line with the Local Safeguarding Board requirements
- ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy
- ensures that the school contributes to early help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership(NSSP) procedures <https://www.proceduresonline.com/northumberlandcs/index.html>
- makes staff aware of NSSP training courses (all available through Learning Together <http://ncc.learningpool.com/>)and the latest policies and procedures on safeguarding
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx#earlyhelpassessmentforms>
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan has unexplained absences
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is sent securely to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The pupil's social worker should also be informed of the change in school
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- ensures that all appropriate staff members have a working knowledge and understanding of their role in case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency planning meetings, to ensure that they attend and are able to effectively contribute when required to do so
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the NSSP
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with governors and trustees
- liaises with the nominated governor and headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) as appropriate
- ensures a record of staff attendance at child protection and safeguarding training is maintained
- ensures staff are kept up to date with key priorities within the LA, including learning from serious practice reviews
- makes the child protection & safeguarding policy available publicly, on the school's

- website or by other means
- ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- has the lead role for Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour in the school and ensures the school meets all requirements set out in the LA procedures
- reports concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, following the Prevent referral process and refer cases by e-mail to OneCall . If the matter is urgent then Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In cases where further advice from the Police is sought dial 101. The Department of Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent (020 7340 7264)
- meets all other responsibilities as set out for DSLs in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague, including supply staff, towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code, available in school and on website, enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the head teacher/principal should be reported to the chair of governors

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure immediate actions

Allegations Against Staff

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, including supply staff, governors, volunteers and agency staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils and we must act on every allegation.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. In the event of suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

The school allegation procedure will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including supply teachers and volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

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

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping*

Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023) and in the school's Managing Allegations Policy and Procedures.

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites. Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Helping Children to Keep Themselves Safe

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. We will therefore raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep themselves safe, this will include activities to improve their resilience. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

The school will therefore;

- establish and maintain an environment and positive ethos where children feel secure, supported and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to, can learn, develop and feel valued;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;

include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, develop resilience and that they know to whom to turn for help. We ensure that our curriculum provides opportunities to children to help them express feelings, be assertive, raise self-esteem, be safe, develop an awareness of potential risks to health and well-being and understand that they have an entitlement to say "no" on occasions which make them feel uncomfortable. This is done through Health Education during topics on Ourselves and Healthy Living using the "Health for Life" materials, E-Safety training and R.E. topics.

Support for Those Involved in a Child Protection Issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, ensure that lines of communication are maintained
- following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies
- providing access to supervision for those staff dealing with child protection issues

Complaints Procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the headteacher and governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is available at school and on the website. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and

grievance procedures.

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and NSSP and national guidance.

Our annual audit (S175) has been reviewed by the Chair of Govs Safeguarding leaf for Gov. body. The S175 has submitted to the local authority.

The Head Teacher:

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- school leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- contacts the LADO immediately an allegation is made against a member of staff, seeking advice and then works with the LADO to follow the advice received
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Good Practice Guidelines and Staff Code of Conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being an active listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example, bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid

- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and NSSP procedures At present 2023/2024 we do not have any children who require the use of reasonable force.
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care. All verbal concerns will be recorded in writing/on CPOMS
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media.

Abuse of Position of Trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

The school's Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by/available to all staff members.

Children Who May be Particularly Vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- displaying early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- experiencing anxiety or mental health problems
- looked after or returned home after a period of care
- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs or misusing substances themselves
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language

- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism or being radicalised
- showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation (inc County Lines)
- privately fostered

Staff Training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a mandatory briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff, including the head teacher (unless the head teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. Staff receive annual updates and a detailed programme (either online or face to face) at least every three years.

The DSL (and deputies) will receive annual safeguarding training, with subjects to reflect local and national priorities and including a refresher session on their roles and responsibilities every two years.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection and safeguarding policy and staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and have read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (Part 1 and Annexe A)

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's **Visiting Staff Leaflet and a copy of/summary of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**, which will be made available to them on their arrival.

Safer Recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) and the school's Staff Recruitment procedures

Two members of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked. The school advises all agencies of their procedures for dealing with allegations, ensuring agencies are fully aware of the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) in relation to the school having a lead role in the management of any allegations, working with the LADO.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Regulated Activity

Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity.

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised Volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site Security

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The head teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitors should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended School and Off-site Arrangements

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, the school child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site the school will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, the school will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Photography and Images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect pupils the school will:

- seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell a member of staff if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

E-safety

Pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet.

Unfortunately, some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

The school's **e-safety policy, available in School and on the website** explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and whilst they are accessing on-line learning whilst out of school and protect and educate pupils in the safe use of technology. Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through school's anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with child protection procedures.

All staff receive e-safety training and the school's e-safety coordinator is Hazel Davey. The school considers e-safety as a priority and included in this is how we manage pupils' use of their own electronic devices on the school site, and in particular mobile phones. When pupils use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. We allow staff personal electronic devices, mobile phones accesses in the staffroom only. Staff do not contact or have electronic communications with pupils.

Staff/pupil Relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation

Child Protection Procedures

Recognising Abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people (child-on-child abuse).

The four types of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect

See Appendix A

Taking Action

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

- a. report any suspicious injury or suspect dialogue **no matter how small** to the **designated teacher**
- b. in an emergency take the action necessary to keep a the child, if necessary call 999 report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL
- c. **never** mention to parents what a pupil has disclosed before reporting to the designated person and social services
- d. **never** investigate further or take action beyond that agreed in the procedures established by the NSPCC. Share information on a need to know basis only- do not discuss issues with colleagues friends or family
- e. Complete a written record.
- f. Seek support if you are distressed contact the appropriate area office/district office of the Social Services Department as soon as possible after the concerns are reported

- g. inform, in writing, the Senior Education Officer (Services Division)
- h. if a parent or guardian volunteers information it should be recorded but it is not staff's responsibility to make enquiries of parents or guardians
- i. staff should note carefully what they have observed and when they have observed it and record only factual information. Signs of physical injury should be described in detail or sketched.

Important Points to Remember

Try not to display any sign of shock or disapproval when the child is making a disclosure.

The child may not regard the experience as either bad or painful, they may not feel guilty or angry.

Be aware of your own feelings which may be different from those of the child.

Take care of yourself by making sure that you have an opportunity to discuss your feelings with someone at a later stage.

Do not destroy any evidence as it may be useful in a court of law.

Initial disclosure, even if retracted, still must be referred.

If You are Concerned About a Pupil's Welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed or their patterns of attendance may have altered. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill or an accident has occurred. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are okay or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use a **concern form** (to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention will be managed through the Early Help process

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx#earlyhelpassessmentforms>

The Data Protection Act and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping a child safe.

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and pupils on request, and is available on the website

The Child's Wishes

Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Reporting Directly to Child Protection Agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the head teacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)*

COVID-19

During COVID-19, every step has been taken to protect children in respect of safeguarding and their health. Our risk assessment 7.0, available on the website outlines the procedures we undertake daily to protect our school community.

Date Approved by the Governing Body:

Signed by the Chair of Governors

This policy was reviewed: September 2023

Date of next review: September 2024