

The Bridge Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Norfolk Schools)

September 2025



Pride
Passion
Partnership
Professionalism
Positivity

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Name of Document | The Bridge Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Norfolk Schools) |
| Status | APPROVED |
| Date Approved | September 2025 |
| Policy Approver | The Board of Directors |
| Policy Owner | Barney Geen, Head of School Improvement and Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead |
| Policy Author | Barney Geen, Head of School Improvement and Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead |
| Next Review Date | July 2026 |

Please note that all Trust policies are reviewed annually. Should you have any queries regards this policy, note an omission or wish to propose an amendment, please email mattheweldon.lake@thebridgetrust.academy

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 4 |
| Policy Consultation & Review | 4 |
| 1. Purpose and Aims | 5 |
| 2. Our Ethos | 5 |
| 3. Roles and Responsibilities | 7 |
| 3.1 Universal responsibility | 8 |
| 3.2 Local governing bodies | 8 |
| 3.3 The Headteacher..... | 8 |
| 3.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)..... | 9 |
| 4. Training and Induction | 10 |
| 5. Procedures for Managing Concerns | 11 |
| 6. Specific Safeguarding Issues | 13 |
| Contextual Safeguarding | 13 |
| Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): County Lines and Serious Violence..... | 13 |
| So-called ‘honour-based violence (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage) | 14 |
| Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism | 14 |
| Child on child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment | 15 |
| Modern Slavery | 16 |
| Safeguarding responses to children who are absent from education..... | 16 |
| Mental Health..... | 17 |
| Online Safety | 17 |
| Cybercrime | 18 |
| Domestic Abuse | 18 |
| Children with special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues | 18 |
| Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender | 18 |
| 7. Records and Information Sharing | 19 |
| 8. Working with Parents and Carers | 19 |
| 9. Child Protection Conferences..... | 20 |
| 10. Safer Recruitment | 21 |
| 11. Safer Working Practice..... | 21 |
| 12. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers..... | 22 |
| Allegations that may meet the harms threshold | 22 |
| Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold | 23 |
| 13. Use of premises for non-school/college activities | 23 |
| 14. Relevant Policies | 24 |
| 15. Statutory Framework..... | 24 |
| 16. APPENDICES..... | 26 |
| A. FEN RIVERS AND EASTON: Recording Form for Safeguarding Concerns | 26 |
| B. FEN RIVERS AND EASTON: Body Maps..... | 27 |
| C: FEN RIVERS AND EASTON: Local Safeguarding Procedures..... | 30 |
| Children’s Advice and Duty Service- CADS | 30 |

| | |
|---|----|
| D. FEN RIVERS AND EASTON: Advice for schools, colleges and alternative education providers where there are concerns about an adult who works within the setting. | 31 |
| E. FEN RIVERS: Warner Interviews | 32 |
| F. FEN RIVERS: Mental Health Lead | 32 |
| G. FEN RIVERS: Curriculum | 32 |

Introduction

This policy reflects the changes in national guidance as a consequence of the publication of [Keeping children safe in education](#) July 2025 (for information) version, pending publication of final version which comes into force in September 2025.

In accordance with the guidance, governing boards and proprietors of independent schools and colleges should ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and are kept up to date as it is revised. The policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office.

The policy is built upon the Norfolk Safeguarding and Child Protection Model Policy. Our policy emphasises the principles and procedures we use to manage Norfolk school’s contextual risks.

The policy reflects these changes to statutory and local guidance:

| | |
|------------|---|
| Throughout | All references to ‘ <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> ’ (2024) have been removed and replaced with reference to ‘ <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> ’ (2025). |
| 2.8 | Updated to reflect the bullet points in relation to early help. |
| 2.9 | Addition of Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. |
| 3.5 | Addition of exploitation. |
| 5.1 | Changed the link from the Norfolk Threshold Guidance to the Norfolk Continuum of Need Guidance . |
| 6.8 | Link added to the Children’s Society Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation guidance. |
| 6.9 | Addition of exploitation. |
| 6.10 | Replacement of violence with abuse. Addition of link to Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures. |
| 6.13 | Updated to filtering and monitoring. |
| 6.15 | Link to UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people updated. |
| 6.26 | Updated in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children , 2023, definition of abuse, neglect and exploitation. |
| 6.32 | Link added to the Education Network in relation to Cyber Security standards. |
| 8.6 | Operation Encompass paragraph updated. |
| 9.3 | Addition of school attendance for information to be included for reports for Child Protection Conferences. |
| Appendix 3 | Added link to information about ‘ getting the right support to children and families – who to call ’ into consideration of early help box. |

Policy Consultation & Review

We recognise the expertise our staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated safeguarding arrangements.

The policy is provided to all staff at induction alongside the Staff Handbook, Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy and Behaviour Policy. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One and [Keeping children safe in education](#)

1. Purpose and Aims

1.1 The purpose of The Bridge Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Norfolk Schools) is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our schools is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:

- Provide help and support to meet the needs of children and young people as soon as problems emerge.
- Protect children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Prevent impairment of our children's and young people's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensure that children and young people at our school grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertake that role to enable children and young people at our schools to have the best outcomes.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to all staff including supply staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school.

1.3 Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at our school. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

1.4 We recognise that our safeguarding responsibilities are clearly linked to our responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who are absent from school or who go missing from education, particularly for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions. The attendance lead (or a senior leader) will regularly liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to discuss all persistently absent pupils and those who go missing to identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to ensure that appropriate safeguarding responses have been put in place to reduce the risk of future harm.

1.5 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers and visitors.

2. Our Ethos

2.1 The child's welfare is of paramount importance. Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our schools will be able to talk freely to any member of staff if they are worried or concerned about something. All staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

2.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that staff at our school play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child.

2.3 At The Bridge Trust we ensure that safeguarding and child protection is at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. We operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

2.4 Where there is a safeguarding concern, the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The systems we have in place are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

2.5 All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child, and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they

have chosen to disclose. All staff will be trained to recognise 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.

2.6 Throughout our broad and balanced curriculums, we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the knowledge, values and skills they need to identify risks, including knowing when and how to ask for help for themselves and others to stay safe (this includes online). Through this work, we take due regard of pupils' individual needs. Relationships, Sex and Health Education (delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum) will cover relevant topics in an age and stage appropriate way, enabling pupils to learn about their rights and responsibilities to behave and stay safe in a variety of contexts on and offline. This will provide further reinforcement to help children identify risks, know when to seek support and develop the skills to ask for help from trustworthy, reliable sources.

Further information can be found in the DfE guidance '[Teaching online safety in school](#)' and '[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education](#)'. This education is underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system.

2.7 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (2023) and the [Norfolk Multi Agency Safeguarding Partnership arrangements](#).

2.8 As part of our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, we will provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified. These may include if a child:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (all pupils at both schools)
- has a mental health need (a universal need at Fen Rivers)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or from home
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- 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 drugs or alcohol themselves
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child

2.9 At The Bridge Trust we understand the importance of working in a way that adheres to the following legislation:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

This means we do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

| Fen Rivers Academy | | |
|---|--|--|
| Role | Name | Contact details |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Rachel Good | Rachel.Good@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Mental Health Lead | Amanda Fewkes | Amanda.Fewkes@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Deputy DSL | Amanda Fewkes James Thompson Jodie Reedman Judith Henson Teagan Burr Hayley Clifton Amy Taylor Jodie Demidh | Amanda.Fewkes@thebridgetrust.academy James.Thompson@thebridgetrust.academy Jodie.Reedman@thebridgetrust.academy Judith.Henson@thebridgetrust.academy Teagan.Burr@thebridgetrust.academy Hayley.Clifton@thebridgetrust.academy Amy.Taylor@thebridgetrust.academy Jodie.Demidh@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Headteacher | Amanda Fewkes | Amanda.Fewkes@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Safeguarding and Attendance Officer, The Bridge MAT | Kari Stonach | kstonach.206@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Head of School Improvement and Designated Safeguarding Lead, The Bridge MAT | Barney Geen | barney.geen@thebridgetrust.academy |

| The Bridge Easton | | |
|---|--|--|
| Role | Name | Contact details |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Natalie Does | Natalie.dores@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Mental Health Lead | Georgia Garrod | Georgia.garrod@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Lead Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (LDDSL) | Lisa Wright Dean Harris | Lisa.Wright@thebridgetrust.academy Dean.Harris@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Deputy DSL | Claire Greengrass Kirsty Sims Lucy Leaford | Claire.greengrass@thebridgetrust.academy Kirsty.sims@thebridgetrust.academy Lucy.leaford@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Headteacher | Natalie Does | Natalie.dores@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Safeguarding and Attendance Officer, The Bridge MAT | Kari Stonach | kstonach.206@thebridgetrust.academy |
| Head of School Improvement and Designated Safeguarding Lead, The Bridge MAT | Barney Geen | Barney.geen@thebridgetrust.academy |

3.1 Universal responsibility

It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our school to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the pupils at this school. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

3.2 Local governing bodies

- Governors on local governing bodies will monitor and review the school-specific elements of this policy after the policy has been reviewed and approved by Trust directors (trustees) and will also hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of the policy. All members of each local governing body have read and will follow KCSIE 2025.
- At each school, we have a nominated local governor for safeguarding. They are appointed to act as the governor with a specific responsible for safeguarding, to liaise with the Headteacher and school DSL on local safeguarding issues and report to the lead director for safeguarding. This is a strategic role rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual pupils.
- Whilst directors hold overall responsibility for the child protection and safeguarding functions of all schools, the day-to-day operational responsibility rests with the Headteacher. All directors and local governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. Both directors and local governors have access to GovernorHub and [Norfolk Governor Services](#) training and are included in safeguarding training provided for staff in person as well as remotely. This is to make sure that they:
 - have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge.
 - can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding
- The Head of People Services and senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring that robust recruitment procedures are followed that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. They adhere to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and make sure that robust recruitment and selection procedures in place, including ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised while at work.
- The CEO, Head of School Improvement, and/or Head of People Services are responsible for liaising with Norfolk County Council's Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) LADO@norfolk.gov.uk in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher.

3.3 The Headteacher

The Fen Rivers Academy and The Bridge Easton Headteacher are responsible for:

- Identifying a senior member of staff from their school's leadership team to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Identifying alternate members of staff to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in his/her absence to ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation, are followed by all staff.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing procedures.

- Liaise with the LADO in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensuring the Trust's safeguarding tracker is updated in a timely manner so that key safeguarding information is gathered and trends identified and responded to.
- Ensuring that the Trust's standard safeguarding procedure is consistently followed.
- In partnership with the DSL, making sure that all concerns about pupils' welfare, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded in writing. CPOMS records should include:
 - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
 - a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

3.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of staff, from the leadership team who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within each school. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex C of ['Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025'](#).
- The DSLs at The Fen Rivers Academy and The Bridge Easton will provide advice and support to other staff at their respective schools on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and shared with the DSL.
- During term time the designated safeguarding lead and or a deputy will always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If in *exceptional* circumstances, a DSL is not available on the school site in person, we will ensure that they are available via telephone and/or any other relevant media.
- The DSLs will represent their respective school at child protection conferences and core group meetings. Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience our DSLs will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse to Children's Services, take part in strategy discussions and other interagency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children.
- The DSLs will maintain records and child protection files ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely (see section 7 for more information.)
- The DSLs are responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have been trained within the school to the agreed school's [safeguarding training package](#) provided by Children's Services.
- The DSLs will obtain details of the Local Authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support a child who is a care leaver.
- The DSLs will work with the Headteacher and senior leaders, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement. This will include understanding their academic progress and attainment and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort and supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential.

- We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health. The DSLs will use the information that they hold about children with a social worker to make decisions in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and help promote educational outcomes. The DSLs will ensure that 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 and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.
- The DSL will take the lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at the school.
- Deputy DSLs should have the same level of training as DSLs. Norfolk County Council training provides essential local information, including regarding local risks, procedures and contacts. Therefore, all DSLs and deputy DSLs should secure NCC training as soon as possible after stepping into role.

4. Training and Induction

4.1 When new staff join our school they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of this safeguarding policy along with the staff code of conduct, Part one and Annex B of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and told who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs are. They will also receive a copy of the behaviour policy and the school's response to children who are absent from education – this information is included in section 6 of this policy. All staff are expected to read these key documents. They will also be provided with information about how to record and report safeguarding concerns.

All new staff will be given access to our electronic safeguarding reporting system, CPOMS, within two weeks of starting. The DSL will ensure all staff are able to access the system and understand how to record a concern. The DSL or deputy DSL will be available to support with recording a concern at all times and especially until new staff feel confident in using the system. In the interim, a paper form should be used to report a safeguarding concern and handed directly to the DSL or deputy DSL in their absence. Training on how to use CPOMS will be carried out as part of induction of all new staff. Agency staff will be required to report concerns on the safeguarding concerns form, attached in the appendices. Long term agency staff will be supplied with a CPOMS log in.

4.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will receive safeguarding training during their induction period within two weeks of joining the school. This programme will include information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child (including reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe), how to record, the processes for referral to Children's Services and the statutory assessments under Section 17 and Section 47 as well as the remit of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The training will also include information about whistleblowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children. Staff will also receive online safety training, including understanding the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as this is part of our overarching safeguarding approach.

4.3 In addition to the safeguarding induction, we will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education. In order to achieve this, we will ensure that:

- all members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training on an annual basis and we will evaluate the impact of this training;
- all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively;
- Additional training will be linked to contextual safeguarding and local issues presented and will be through The National College and National Online Safety platforms.

- All training is recorded on the training log and revisited in monthly quizzes to ensure it is fresh in people's minds to keep them vigilant.

4.4 All regular visitors and long term agency staff at our schools will be given schools specific 'Key safeguarding guidance'. They have the opportunity to ask questions about the guidance and know how to seek clarification if required. They will then confirm that they have read and understood this guidance.

Upon entry to the school for the first time, all visitors, temporary staff and volunteers are given a leaflet detailing who the DSL and deputy DSL's are and 'what to do if you need to raise a concern during your visit.'

4.5 The DSL, the alternate designated member(s) of staff and any other senior member of staff who may be in a position of making referrals or attending child protection conferences or core groups will attend one of the multi-agency training courses organised by Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Partnership at least once every three years. The DSL and alternate(s) will attend Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) training provided by the Local Authority every two years. In addition to formal training, DSLs will ensure that they update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

4.6 DSLs access e-courier and disseminate national and local updates to staff, attend internal and local area DSL network meetings, attend Local Safeguarding Children's Groups; in addition to their own personal learning and development through The National College training.

4.7 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) provides links to guidance on specific safeguarding issues such as Child Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation. In addition, local guidance can be accessed via Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership and within the [Safeguarding Toolkit](#) on the [Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers website](#).

5. Procedures for Managing Concerns

5.1 The Bridge Trust adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with [Norfolk Local Assessment Protocol](#) and the [Norfolk Continuum of Need Guidance](#).

5.2 Every member of staff, including volunteers working with children at our school, is advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy.

5.3 All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy immediately 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.

5.4 It is **not** the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

5.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern. Any member of staff or visitor to our schools who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to an alternate designated person.

In the absence of any of the staff above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

5.6 All concerns about a child or young person should be reported **without delay** and recorded in writing using the agreed system in the school. Records should:

- be a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern. Therefore, records should contain these features:
 - include as many details as possible
 - clearly identify the pupil and the nature of the concern and any other pupils or adults involved
 - clearly identify the actions already taken
 - be clearly written and logically structured
 - have a clear and concise chronology of events relating to the concern
 - be free from jargon and abbreviations
 - separate fact from opinion
 - Record information verbatim, not making assumptions about people, body parts etc. For example, *X said, "Daddy did it"* rather than, *X said it was his father.*
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved. It is likely that the DSL or deputy DSL will add this information
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. It is likely that the DSL or deputy DSL will add this information

5.7 Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from the Norfolk Children's Advice & Duty Service (CADS) as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

5.8 All referrals will be made in line with Norfolk Children's Services procedures.

5.9 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to Norfolk CADS immediately. Anybody can make a referral in these circumstances. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

5.10 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Norfolk CADS, or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their alternate and the headteacher are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

5.11 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the headteacher or Head of School Improvement and Designated Safeguarding Lead, The Bridge MAT. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately, at this point they should contact Norfolk CADS directly with their concerns.

6. Specific Safeguarding Issues

Contextual Safeguarding

6.1 We recognise that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the school environment and/or can occur between children outside of the school. This is known as contextual safeguarding. It is key that all school staff understand the definition of contextual safeguarding and consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Through training we will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. When reporting concerns, staff should include as much information and background detail as possible so the DSL can make a referral with a holistic view of the child. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

6.2 We recognise that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges and these are discussed in staff training. These additional barriers can include:

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

6.3 We understand that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): County Lines and Serious Violence

6.4 We train staff to recognise that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

6.5 Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse and this imbalance of power coerces, manipulates or deceives a child or young person into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator. Child sexual exploitation does not always include physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. We understand that some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

6.6 Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity. Drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

6.7 We understand that children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. We will treat these children as victims

understanding that they have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to. We recognise the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys and that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

6.8 Staff are aware of the indicators and risk factors which may signal a child is vulnerable to or involved with serious violent crime. We make reference to the Home Office's [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#), and [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#) and the [Children's Society Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation](#) guidance for more information.

6.9 If a child is suspected to be at risk exploitation or involvement in county lines, a referral to the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) will be made alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

So-called 'honour-based violence (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

6.10 Fen Rivers Academy and The Bridge Easton recognise that their staff are well placed to identify concerns and take action to prevent children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) and provide guidance on these issues through our safeguarding training. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA, they should inform the DSL who will activate [local safeguarding procedures](#), using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care.

6.11 Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers. [Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#) (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. We will provide guidance and support to our teachers on this requirement and further information on when and how to make a report can be found in the following Home Office guidance: [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation- procedural information](#) Home Office (January 2020)

6.12 Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. The Forced Marriage Unit has [statutory guidance](#) and [Multi-agency guidelines](#) and can be contacted for advice or more information: Contact 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fco.gov.uk

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

6.13 We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. Fen Rivers Academy and The Bridge Easton ensure that:

- Through training, staff, volunteers and governors have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant in school and how to respond when concerns arise.
- There are systems in place for keeping pupils safe from extremist material when accessing the internet in our school by using effective filtering and monitoring policies.
- The DSLs have received Prevent training and will act as the point of contact within their respective school for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- The DSLs will make referrals in accordance with [Norfolk Channel Procedures](#) and will represent their respective school at Channel meetings as required.
- Through our curriculum, we will promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

Child on child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

6.14 Staff are trained so that they are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- upskirting;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

6.15 We recognise that children are vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by other children or siblings. Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important that all staff and volunteers remember the impact on both the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. We understand that abuse can occur in intimate personal relationships between children; and that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos¹ (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is a form of child-on-child abuse.

6.16 We understand, that even if there are no reports in our setting it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. We recognise that pupils may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse and can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report, and this may come from a friend or a conversation that is overheard. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and the same safeguarding children procedures will apply in respect of any child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to child-on-child abuse and they will always challenge this. It must never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Doing this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

6.17 Our schools regularly review decisions and actions, and relevant policies are updated to reflect any lessons learnt. We look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, we decide upon an appropriate course of action.

6.18 All staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. We will also offer appropriate support to the perpetrator and any other children involved.

6.19 All staff will understand that they should follow our safeguarding procedures for reporting a concern if they are worried about child-on-child abuse. The DSL will respond to any concerns related to child-on-child abuse in line with guidance outlined in Part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education. We will ensure that all concerns, discussions and decisions reached are clearly recorded and any identified actions are followed up.

6.20 We will work with other agencies including the police and Children's Social Care, as required to respond to concerns about sexual violence and harassment. We will seek consultations where there are concerns or worries about developmentally inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour from the Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Team as required so that we ensure we are offering the right support to the child(ren).

¹ UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#)

6.21 Support will depend on the circumstances of each case and the needs of the child, it may include completion of risk assessments to support children to remain in school whilst safeguarding other children and the victim, delivery of early intervention in respect of HSB and/or referral to [The Harbour Centre Sexual Assault Referral Centre](#) (SARC) where a pupil discloses a rape, an attempted rape or a serious sexual assault whether this has happened recently or in the past. The assault does not have to have taken place in Norfolk but the victim must live in Norfolk to access support. The SARC also has a 24/7 helpline 01603 276381 if pupils or staff need to speak to a Crisis Worker for help & advice. Referral forms can be found on [The Harbour Centre website](#). The DSL will always contact the police in cases of rape and serious sexual assault as per the guidance [When to call the Police: a guide for schools and colleges, National Police Chiefs Council](#).

Modern Slavery

6.22 Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. We refer to the DfE guidance [Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims](#) for concerns of this nature. for concerns of this nature.

Safeguarding responses to children who are absent from education

6.23 Our schools and trust colleagues adhere to the '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)' (2024) guidance. All staff should be aware of the safeguarding responsibilities for children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, or for prolonged periods, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

6.24 We use the following procedures and processes to ensure there is an appropriate safeguarding response to children who are absent from education:

- An attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session;
- We make every effort to contact parents and carers and follow up with the emergency contacts held;
- We hold at least two emergency contact numbers for each of the pupils on our roll wherever possible.
- Staff will alert DSLs to any concerns raised regarding children who are absent from school;
- The DSLs will meet regularly with the Attendance Lead, SENCo and other members of the pastoral team to ensure that each response is thorough and takes into account all the relevant information about individual children;
- We will follow the procedures outlined in our attendance policy including undertaking first day calling and monitoring data to ensure we intervene early in cases of poor attendance and/or unexplained absences.
- We understand we remain responsible for the safeguarding of all pupils who are placed in an alternative provision.
- When removing a child from roll at the standard and non-standard transition points, we will inform the Local Authority in accordance with statutory requirements and pass on all safeguarding files.

Our schools and Trust staff work with parents, carers and pupils to improve attendance. We understand that every pupil's barriers and circumstances are different and therefore we have a variety of interventions to support with improving attendance and removing barriers to full school attendance. These may include homes visits, attendance meetings with our attendance lead, Early Help referrals, part-time timetables to increase time on site, consideration of the reasons behind emotionally based school avoidance and liaison with the Norfolk LA Education Support team for further advice and guidance where attendance does not improve.

Mental Health

6.25 Our schools work with parents, carers and pupils to improve attendance. We understand that every pupil's barriers and circumstances are different and therefore we have a variety of interventions to support with improving attendance and removing barriers to full school attendance. These may include home visits, attendance meetings with our Attendance Officer, Early Help referrals, part-time timetables to increase time on site, consideration of the reasons behind emotionally based school avoidance and liaison with the Norfolk LA Education Support team for further advice and guidance where attendance does not improve.

All staff are made aware, through training, that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Our staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

6.26 We understand that where children have suffered abuse, neglect or exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Therefore, through training, staff are aware of how children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. All staff are aware that if they have a mental health concern about a child that is *also* a safeguarding concern, they should take immediate action by passing the information on to a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.27 There are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems and work with other agencies as required to respond to these concerns. Designated Safeguarding Leads make reference to the '[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#)' DfE guidance for further support.

Online Safety

6.28 All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. We understand that in many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. We know that children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography.

6.29 As part of the requirement for staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training, online safety training is also delivered. We will ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout the curriculum and is reflected in relevant policies, teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

6.30 Fen Rivers Academy and The Bridge Easton recognise that filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from potential harmful and inappropriate online material. Filtering and monitoring reports and checks are carried out by the DSL alongside our IT team to identify risk. During reviews our current provision, any gaps and specific needs of our pupils and staff are considered.

We ensure that filtering and monitoring systems are installed on all school owned devices, including those used off site for all user groups. Senior school leaders and DSLs monitor use through Senso software. If a concern is picked up through monitoring, the DSL will take the lead responsibility for any safeguarding and child protection matters and will ensure the right actions are taken at the right time, and appropriate records are made as described in section 5 above. Suitable education and guidance will be provided where a risk or safeguarding concern is identified. The DSL is also able to further restrict, or entirely revoke use of devices, if necessary. London Grid for Learning (LGfL) restricts access to unsuitable material. More details can be found in our ICT and Acceptable use policies.

6.31 We recognise that technology, and risks and harms related to the internet evolve and change rapidly. Therefore, we carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by a risk assessment (on at least an annual basis) that considers and reflects the risks that children face in our setting. We also communicate with parents and carers to reinforce the importance of children being safe online.

Cybercrime

6.32 We understand that cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). We are aware of the [Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK](#) and the guidance from [the National Education Network](#).

6.33 If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead will consider a referral to the [Cyber Choices programme](#) which aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Dependent on the activity a referral to the police may also be considered appropriate.

Domestic Abuse

6.34 All staff are aware that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. We understand that children can be victims of domestic abuse. Where they see, hear or experience the effects this can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. We are aware of the [Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service \(NIDAS\)](#) and signpost victims to the service. [Norfolk and Suffolk Victim Care are available to offer support where threshold for NIDAS support has not been met.](#)

Children with special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues

6.35 All our pupils have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges such as

- 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 prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

6.36 We work to address these additional challenges and consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

6.37 We also recognise that pupils who attend Alternative Provision will often have complex needs and due to this we are aware of the additional risk of harm these children may be vulnerable to.

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

6.38 The fact that a child or a young person may be lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', we recognise that these children and in some cases children who are perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay or bisexual can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Therefore, we work to reduce any additional barriers faced and provide a safe space for these children to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff. Through our curriculum, we counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

7. Records and Information Sharing

7.1 If staff are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child at our school, they will record their concern either on the agreed reporting form (Appendix 1) or through the setting's electronic system. Any concerns should be passed to the school's DSL without delay.

We use an electronic safeguarding system that all staff have access to, CPOMS. There is a record for each child registered at the school. Any paper safeguarding records of concern or paper safeguarding records from previous settings are uploaded to the electronic system and the original is archived in a secure locked cabinet with restricted access.

7.2 Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet if a paper system is used and not with the child's academic file. These files will be the responsibility of the DSLs. Child protection information will only be shared within school on the basis of 'need to know in the child's interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

7.3 Child protection information will be kept up to date. Each concern logged 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.

We will continue to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This includes instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as the Children's Advice and Duty Service or the Prevent programme. Invitations to child protection conferences, core groups and all other multi-agency meetings and minutes taken at these will be stored on the child's file whether an electronic or paper system is used. All our safeguarding records will include; a chronology, contents front cover and will record significant events in the child's life.

7.4 When a child leaves our school, (including in year transfers) the school's DSL will make contact with the DSL at the new school and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving school. This will be within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. We recognise that not providing information as per the timescales can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

7.5 We will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving school and/or evidence of recorded delivery.

7.6 Prior to a child leaving we will consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child.

7.7 Where a parent elects to remove their child from the school roll to home educate, the school will make arrangements to pass any safeguarding concerns to the [Services to Home Educators Team](#) within Norfolk County Council.

8. Working with Parents and Carers

8.1 We are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

8.2 When new pupils join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to contact Norfolk Children's Advice & Duty Service.

8.3 We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated

with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

8.4 We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to Norfolk CADS in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

8.5 In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives.
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above).
- Emergency contact details (if different from above).
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).

The schools will retain this information on the pupil file. The school will only share information about pupils with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil or where a parent has given permission, and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

8.6 We are working in partnership with Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk Children's Services to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household or a missing from home or care episode; this scheme is called Operation Encompass. In order to achieve this, Norfolk Children's Services staff will share police information of all domestic incidents where one of our pupils has been present or experienced a missing episode with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s). On receipt of any information, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on the appropriate support the child requires, this could be silent or overt. All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the '[Norfolk Operation Encompass Protocol](#)'. We will record this information and store this information in accordance with the record keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

9. Child Protection Conferences

9.1 Children's Services will convene a Child Protection conference once a child protection enquiry under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 has been undertaken and the child is judged to be at continuing risk of significant harm. A review conference will take place once a child has been made the subject of a Child Protection Plan in order to monitor the safety of the child and the required reduction in risk.

9.2 Staff members may be asked to attend a child protection conference or core group meetings on behalf of the school in respect of individual children. Usually, the person representing the school at these meetings will be the Headteacher or DSL. In any event, the person attending will need to have as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible; any member of staff may be required to contribute to this process.

9.3 All reports for child protection conferences will be prepared in advance using the [guidance](#) and [template report](#) provided by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents before the conference as appropriate and will include information relating to the child's physical, emotional, and intellectual development, the child's presentation at school and information about school attendance. To complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the child in school.

9.4 Clearly child protection conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved. We will work in an open and honest way with any parent whose child has been referred to Children's Services or whose child is subject to a child protection plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

10. Safer Recruitment

10.1 The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in education. The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the pupils and students in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

10.2 The Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy sets out the roles, responsibilities and processes for key members of staff responsible for the recruitment of all categories of individuals working on the Trust's premises (including employees, volunteers, agency staff, contractors, regular visitors and members of the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies).

10.3 The Safer Recruitment Policy aims to achieve the intention at point 10.1 by outlining the Trust's processes to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies on the basis of their merit, abilities and suitability;
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

10.4 The Safer Recruitment Policy is available on the Trust's Landing Page.

11. Safer Working Practice

11.1 All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

11.2 All staff will be provided with a copy of our Trust's Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook at induction and during the annual affirmation exercise. A copy of the latest Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook are available on the Trust's Landing Page and National College. These two documents provide clear guidelines on the expectations around safe working practices and acceptable conduct. Whilst they don't attempt to cover all eventualities, they do give a framework to help staff think about what they should or shouldn't do and to help them apply sound judgement and knowledge to carry out their duties in accordance with the advice.

11.3 There will be occasion when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them. However, at all times the agreed policy for safe restraint must be adhered to. Further information is available in the Trust's Behaviour Policy. A list of staff that have accessed Norfolk Steps training will be kept by the DSL and Headteacher on the training log.

11.4 If staff or visitors, are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors have a clear glass panel in them.

11.4 The details above are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. This advice can be found in the latest published versions of '[Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings](#)'. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

11.5 As outlined in the Trust's Code of Conduct, when working with our children and young people, adults must:

- consider if activities they are undertaking are in the children and young peoples' best interests;
- be sensitive to the needs and feelings of the children and young people;
- must be respectful and polite;
- must be aware of confidentiality;
- must communicate effectively;

- always use the proper routes for communication;
- co-operate and collaborate, working together to meet the school's shared goals in the best interests of the children.

12. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

12.1 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children at our school. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

12.2 The Trust's Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy outlines the key responsibilities for groups of staff responsible for managing allegations, how staff should report any allegations concerning an adult working onsite and the actions that the Trust will take. The Policy is available to view on the Trust's Landing Page. The key principles and reporting mechanisms are outlined below but further guidance is provided in the policy.

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

12.3 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur, they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. We work to the thresholds for harm as set out in the latest published versions of Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE below. An allegation which may meet the harms threshold may relate to a person who works / volunteers with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed 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
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (e.g. where they are involved in an incident outside of the school which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children, one example being domestic abuse.); or
- behaved in a manner that discriminates against a child on the basis of one or more of their protected characteristics, as defined by the [Equalities Act 2010](#). For instance, treating a child unfairly because of their ethnicity, sex or sexual orientation.

12.4 The Trust will deal with any allegations quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. The Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy provides more information on the steps that will be followed, including seeking advice from the relevant authority.

12.4 Staff at the Trust recognise their responsibility to report / refer allegations or behaviours of concern and / or harm to children by adults in positions of trust who are not employed by the Trust to the LADO service directly at lado@norfolk.gov.uk These are adults such as those in the voluntary sector, taxi drivers, escorts, and fosters carers.

12.4 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children. When concerns arise, we will always ensure that the procedures outlined in the local protocol [Allegations Against Persons who Work with Children](#) and the relevant section of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice. The first point of contact for schools regarding concerns and/ or allegation issues (including for supply teachers) is via the Local Authority Education Duty Desk on 01603 307797. A Duty Advisor (not a LADO) will give advice and guidance on next steps. If the advice is to make a referral to the LADO service then the [LADO referral form](#) should be completed. The completed LADO referral form is then sent via e-mail to: LADO@norfolk.gov.uk. See Appendices further details.

12.5 If an allegation is made or information is received about *any* adult who works/ volunteer in our setting which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work / volunteer with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff and volunteers. In the event that the Headteacher is not contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Headteacher or the DSL. If your concern relates to the Headteacher, please contact the Chief Executive Officer: Dr Penny Barratt OBE.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

12.6 Concerns which do not meet the harm threshold may be termed as a 'low-level concern.' This is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school/Trust may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

12.7 Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children;
- Having favourites;
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door where you cannot be seen by colleagues;
- Humiliating pupils.

12.8 Staff report all low level concerns to the Headteacher or in their absence to the DSL. If reported to the DSL then the DSL will inform the Headteacher of the concern in a timely fashion. The Headteacher will always be the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns.

12.9 Through training and induction, the Trust ensures that all staff understand the importance of self-referring, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

12.10 The steps which should be taken to review and take action against a low level concern, including seeking advice from the relevant authority are outlined in the Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy.

13. Use of premises for non-school/college activities

13.1 Where we hire or rent out our facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we ensure that appropriate arrangements as per the DfE guidance [After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers](#) are in place to keep children safe.

13.2 We will seek assurances that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed). Safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

13.3 If an allegation is made relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using school premises for non-school/college activities, we will follow the safeguarding policies and procedures, included in section

12 above.

14. Relevant Policies

14.1 To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Handbook
- Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Relationships at Work (Staff Connections)
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour which includes measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Safer Recruitment adheres to the relevant sections of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- Whistleblowing
- Attendance
- Online Safety
- Health and Safety including site security
- Harassment and discrimination including racial abuse
- Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- Intimate Care
- First aid
- Educational visits including overnight stays
- RSHE

15. Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) DfE (December 2023)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) DfE (2025)

[Working Together to Improve School Attendance, DfE \(2024\)](#)

[Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures](#)

[Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership Protocol: Allegations Against Persons Who Work with Children](#)

[Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings](#) (Feb 2022)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) DfE (March 2015)

[Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) DfE (May 2024)

[The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#) DfE (September 2023)

[The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation \(September 2023\)](#)

[Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation- procedural information](#) Home Office (January 2020)

[Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#)

[Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#) DfE (February 2017)

[Teaching online safety in school](#) DfE (January 2023)

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) DfE (November 2018)

[Data protection: toolkit for schools](#) DfE (June 2025)

[Promoting the education of children with a social worker](#) (March 2024)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)

[Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#)

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Statutory Guidance \(Home Office April 2023\)](#)

Policy Owner and Contact Details

Barney Geen, Head of School Improvement and Trust DSL
For further information on the Policy, please phone 020 7619 1000
Next Review Date: July 2026

Time form received by DSL:

Action taken:

Referred to...?

Attendance Police Just One CADS PSA Other

Lead Norfolk

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

Date:

Time:

Parents informed? Yes / No (If No, state reason)

Feedback given to...?

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

Pastoral team

Teacher

Child

Person who recorded disclosure

Further Action Agreed:

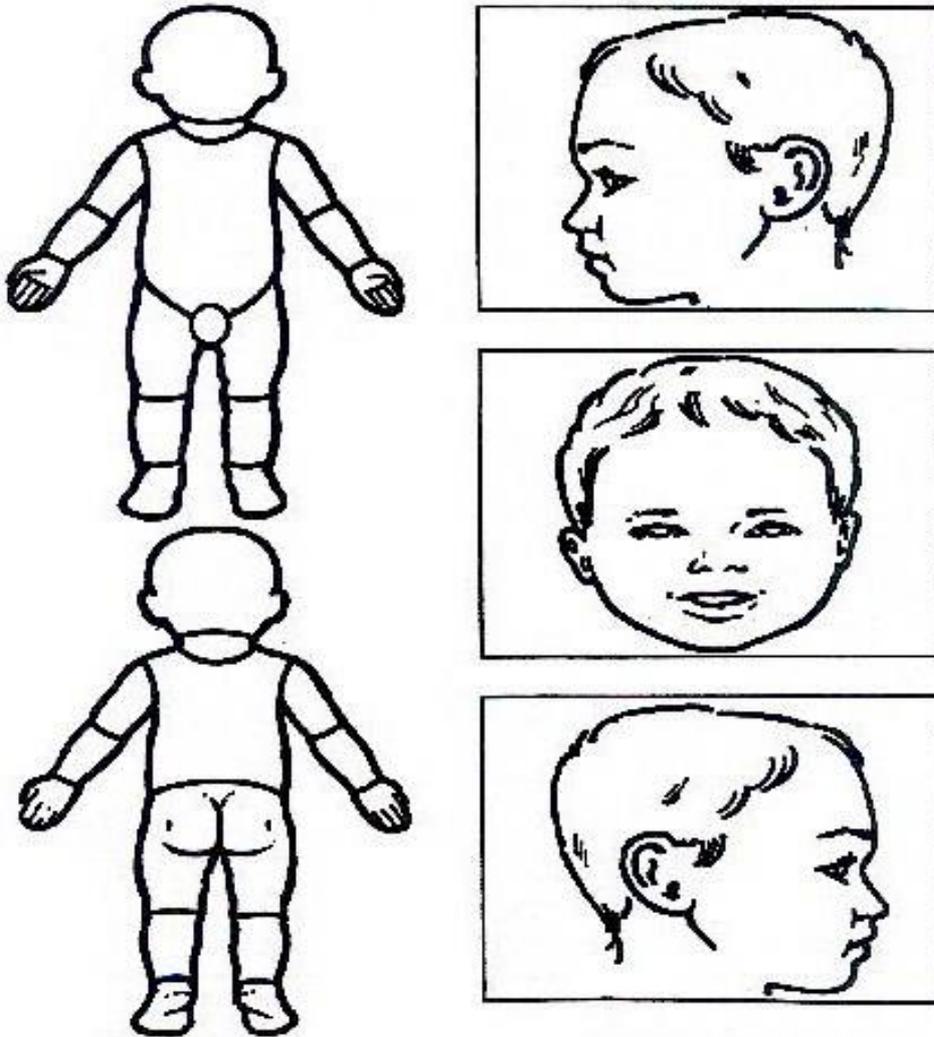
e.g. School to instigate an Early Help Assessment Plan, assessment by Children's Services.

Full name:

DSL Signature:

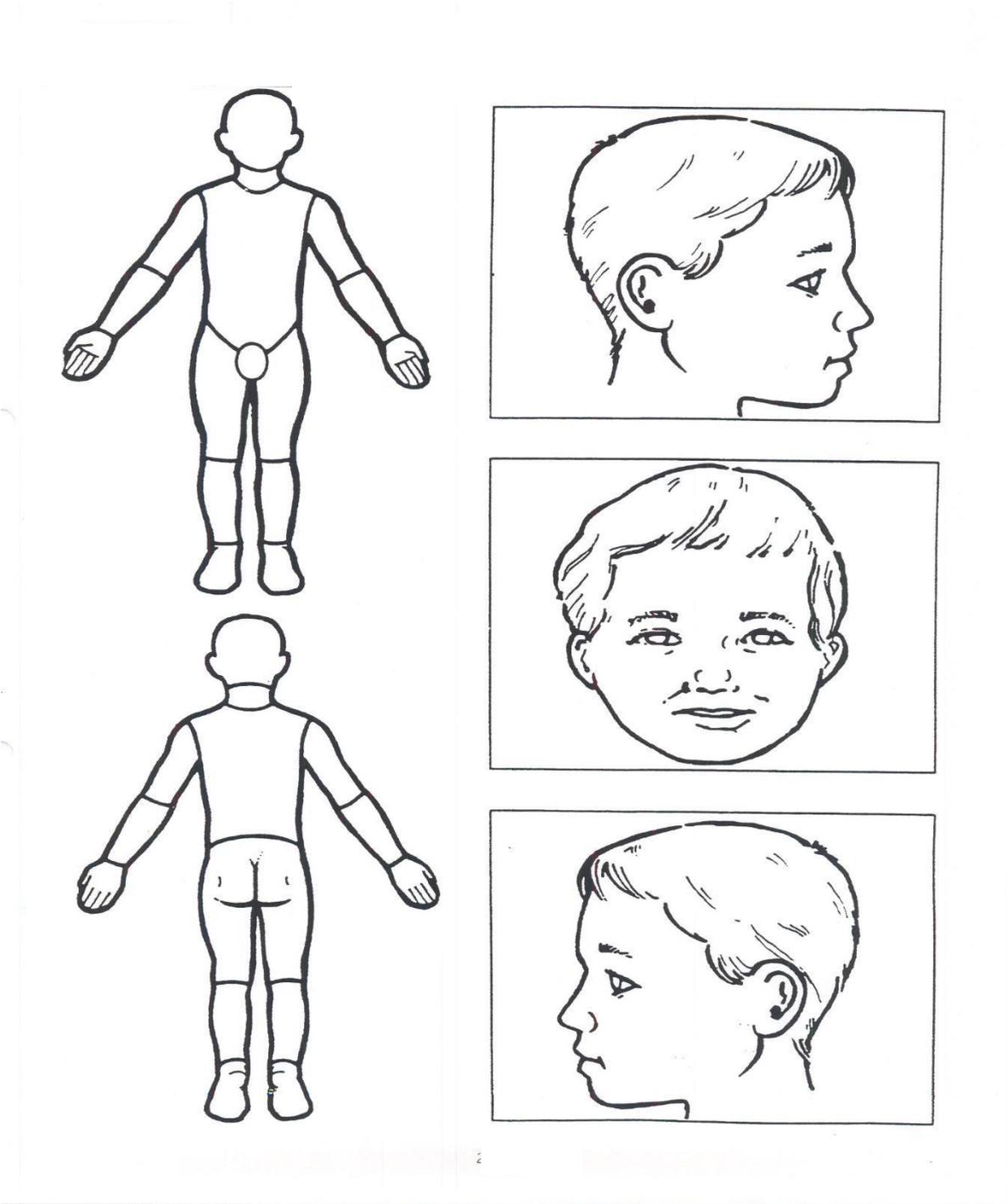
Date:

Young Child



Indicate clearly where the injury was seen and attach this to the Recording Form

Older Child

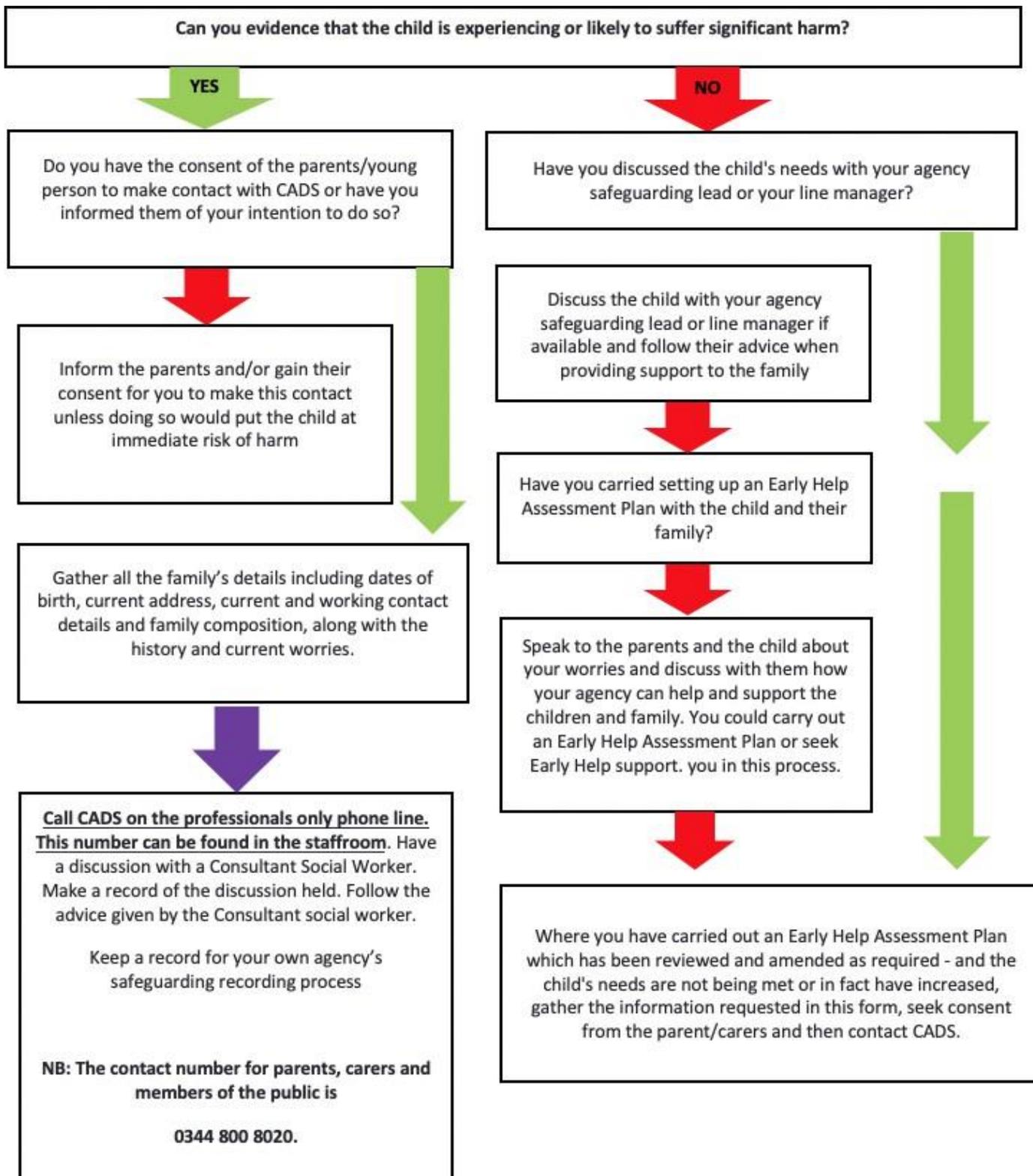


Indicate clearly where the injury was seen and attach this to the Recording Form

C: FEN RIVERS AND EASTON: Local Safeguarding Procedures

Children’s Advice and Duty Service- CADS

Before contacting CADS, please answer the following questions and follow the advice provided:



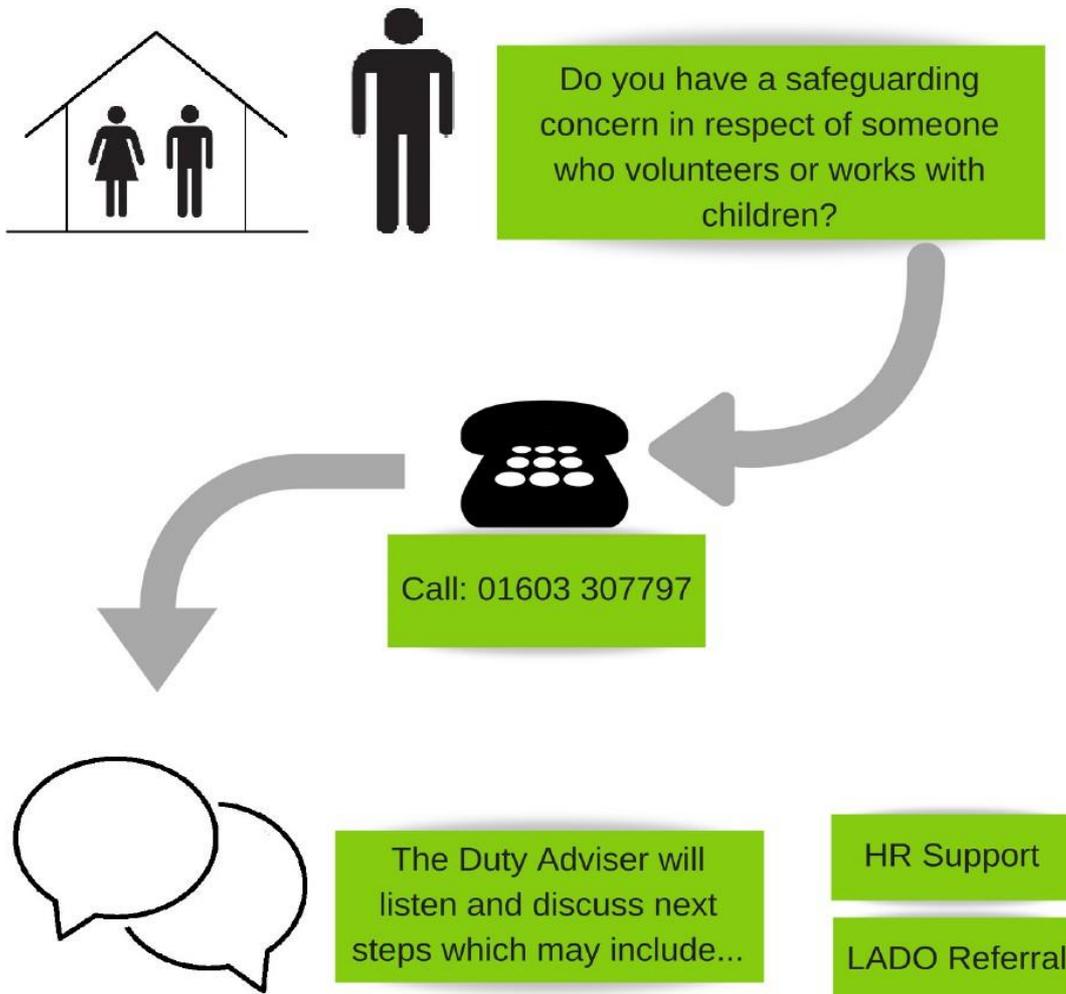
D. FEN RIVERS AND EASTON: Advice for schools, colleges and alternative education providers where there are concerns about an adult who works within the setting.



Guidance for Schools, Colleges & Alternative Education Providers

Education Quality Assurance & Intervention Service

Duty Desk



E. FEN RIVERS: Warner Interviews

Warner Interviews are carried out as part of the safer recruitment processes for all permanent vacancies. Where agency staff are booked long term a Warner Interview will also be carried out within two weeks of starting in the role to ensure the right motivation exists to work with children. This will determine any further training and induction needs should it indicate a colleague is able to continue in post as an agency worker.

F. FEN RIVERS: Mental Health Lead

We understand that where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. We therefore prioritise ensuring staff have the knowledge they need to understand and support mental health. Our training provider is [MHFA England](#) and our mental health lead Amanda Fewkes, headteacher.

G. FEN RIVERS: Curriculum

Throughout our broad and balanced curriculum, we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the knowledge, values and skills they need to identify risks, including knowing when and how to ask for help for themselves and others to stay safe (this includes online). The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum) will cover relevant topics in an age and stage appropriate way, enabling pupils to learn about their rights and responsibilities to behave and stay safe in a variety of contexts on and offline. This will provide further reinforcement to help children identify risks, know when to seek support and develop the skills to ask for help from trustworthy, reliable sources. We achieve this by teaching pupils about safeguarding through the following aspects of our curriculum:

- 11 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum
- 12 Relationships sex education (RSE) curriculum
- 13 Vote for schools

PSHE teaching and learning covers an expansive curriculum provision. This includes combatting extremism and terrorism; RSE consent, contractions, sexting and law. A detailed programme of study for drugs is planned: the term drug and understand the different forms it can take; to explore why people use drugs; to evaluate the impact drug use is having on society; to define the term substance addiction and to understand the different types of addictions that people can have. Class A and B drugs are taught as part of keeping children safe and community.

At KS1 and 2, content focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships and safeguarding *self* including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

In Key Stages 3 and 4 RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe

- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Throughout the academic year Vote for Schools programme of study links all teaching content to safeguarding, following criteria from within the SMSC framework (social, moral, spiritual, cultural, Prevent and British values).

Our community Police officer (PCO) leads bespoke interventions planned in with small groups throughout the year. These are always centred on safeguarding students and being responsible inside and outside of school. This includes: county lines; young carer guidance; physical violence; online safety; gangs and youth violence; further Prevent and drugs referrals (St Giles Trust, etc).

All pupils receive an induction, and as part of their induction the DSL and Deputy DSLs and their roles and responsibilities are explained to them.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and this is outlined in the E-Safety policy. Further information can be found in the DfE guidance [‘Teaching online safety in school’](#) and [‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education’](#). This education is underpinned by the school’s behaviour policy and pastoral support system.