

BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL

WORSLEY, MANCHESTER

M28 2WQ

WHOLE SCHOOL Safeguarding POLICY

This policy is made available to parents of all pupils on the School website and on request from the School Office. It is available to Staff ¹of the School from the School website, on the staff shared drive, in both teacher staff rooms (hard copies) and on request from the School Office. Content of this policy is directly discussed with new staff on induction into the School and its implementation is regularly addressed in staff training sessions.

This policy has been reviewed and authorised by the School Governors, is addressed to all members of staff, trainee teachers, contractors and volunteers. It applies wherever staff, temporary staff or volunteers are working with pupils, even when this is away from the School, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct, the policy for Staff Internet Access, the Sexual Harassment and Abuse policy, the Online Safety policy, the Acceptable Use policy, the Mental Health policy, the Missing Child policy, the Whistle Blowing policy, the Anti-Bullying policy, the Induction of New Staff policy, the Registration and Attendance policy, the Physical Restraint policy, the Behaviour, Discipline, Rewards and Sanctions policy and the Low Level Concerns policy.

1. Policy Statement

The statutory framework for Child Protection was established in the *Children Act (1989)*. The duty of independent schools' proprietors and/or Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the School was explicitly stated in the *Education Act (2002)*. Independent schools are also required to follow the DfE guidance published in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)*. Further statutory and non-statutory guidance can be found in the following documents, all of which are given regard to in this policy;

Statutory Guidance	Non-Statutory guidance
<i>Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (2015).</i>	<i>Information sharing (2024)</i>

¹ The definition of 'staff' is: *Any person working at the school whether under a contract of employment (this covers every employee, no matter what sort of work they do), under a contract for services (this covers self-employed people arranged and/or paid directly by the school. It does not include those in a contract for services with others, subject to the exception immediately below.) or otherwise than under a contract (this covers self-employed people who are arranged by the school for the purposes of the school but, for example, paid directly by parents, such as some peripatetic teachers and therapists. It does not include, for example, private employees of parents permitted to enter school by agreement) but does not include supply staff or a volunteer.* ISI Regulatory Requirements, September 2017, Part 4, Section 244.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015); Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff (2012);
Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)	<i>The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation (2023)</i>
	The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (2015)
	Behaviour in schools (2024)
Statutory guidance: relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education 2026	Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (2026)
Children missing in education (2025)	Preventing youth violence and gang involvement (2013) as well as Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance (2023).
Working together to improve school attendance 2026	Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance (2018)
	NPCC- when to call the police.
	UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes- advice for education settings (2024)
	Searching, screening and confiscation (2022)
	Keeping children safe in out of school settings 2026
	Meeting digital and technology standards in schools 2023
	The Independent School Standards Guidance for Independent Schools April 2026

Associated legislation

The school is aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1988 (HRA). The HRA sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that are the entitlement of all UK citizens that must be respected and protected by all public organisations. We understand that we must pay particular attention to the following;

- Article 3- the right to freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment
- Article 8- the right to respect for private and family life including a duty to protect an individual's physical or psychological integrity
- Article 14- all rights and freedoms must be protected and applied without discrimination
- Protocol 1, Article 2- protecting the right to an education.

We also recognise that being subjected to harassment, violence or abuse, including sexual abuse, may breach any or all of these rights. Further information can be found at equalityhumanrights.com

We also have regard to our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 which includes the Public Sector Equality Duty. We recognise that we cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity (protected characteristics). We will pay careful attention to our legal duties on how we are supporting students with protected characteristics. We will make reasonable adjustments to meet the specific needs of these pupils and take positive action where there is evidence that certain groups are being disproportionately disadvantaged or suffering discrimination, for example, if girls are subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment. Further guidance can be found at Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - (www.gov.uk). For further information/Equality Act guidance - Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com).

This policy has been drawn up with due regard to all of these guidelines and associated legislation to ensure that we do everything possible to safeguard the children in our care. The School fully recognises its duties to both children at risk and children in need. All BWS staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and to remain vigilant for signs of any issues.

WHERE REFERENCE IS MADE TO CHILDREN IN THIS POLICY, 'KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2026' DEFINES THIS AS ALL PUPILS UNDER THE AGE OF 18. HOWEVER, BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL WILL APPLY OUR POLICY TO ALL PUPILS WHO ATTEND THE SCHOOL.

What is Safeguarding?

For the purposes of our policy, safeguarding is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment whether it is within the home or online
- Preventing the 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

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and decisions must **always** be made in the best interests of the child. This policy plays a crucial role in sustaining effective child protection in the day-to-day running of the School. As part of the ethos of the school, the staff and Governors are committed to:

- listening to, relating effectively with and valuing each individual pupil in our care;
- encouraging and supporting parents, carers and guardians and working together in partnership with them; and
- ensuring that all members of staff, both teaching and support, full-time and part-time, are properly trained and supported.

As such, Bridgewater School will take all reasonable measures to:

- ✓ Ensure that we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers;
- ✓ Ensure that we carry out all necessary checks on the suitability of people who serve on the School's governing body in accordance with the regulations and guidance above;
- ✓ Ensure that where the school ceases to use the services of any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) because the person was considered unsuitable to work with children, a prompt and detailed report is made to the Disclosure and Barring Services and consideration is given to referring to TRA (Teaching Regulation Agency);
- ✓ Ensure that systems are in place, and 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.
- ✓ Follow the local inter-agency procedures and advice as set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. For us this is the Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership although we are aware that our children can span other administrative regions.
- ✓ Ensure all staff understand the processes involved in calling for early help from community-based and universal services when more targeted support is required.
- ✓ Protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil;
- ✓ Ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide in the event of a safeguarding concern.
- ✓ Be alert to signs of abuse both in the School and from outside, acknowledging that this outside abuse can be from outside the family unit as well as from within it
- ✓ Be aware of indicators that may signal that pupils are at risk from or involved in serious violent crime;
- ✓ Be alert to the dangers posed by Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and by Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), which can be perpetrated by individuals or groups and can be one-off events or a series of incidents over time; victims may identify as being part of these groups. Exploitation in this way may constitute modern slavery.
- ✓ Deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse;
- ✓ Design and operate procedures which promote this policy;
- ✓ Design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations;

- ✓ Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan;
- ✓ Assess the risk of pupils being subject to radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism/extremist activity and have processes in place to identify any children who may be at risk of such radicalisation;
- ✓ Ensure that visiting speakers and other site visitors are suitably supervised. Careful consideration will be given to the educational purpose and value of any speaker, as well as the age-appropriateness of the material they are delivering. Although speakers will be supervised by school staff, the school will also carry out pre-checks on visitors considered to fall within the realm of Prevent Duty by checking with other schools who have been visited and by carrying out, for example, informal internet searches on the speakers concerned;
- ✓ Ensure that contractors are used outside school hours wherever possible and where unavoidable they will be accompanied at all times by a staff member. Regular contractors are given basic safeguarding training, including the duty to pass on concerns, the identity of the DSL(s) and adhering to appropriate boundaries with pupils.
- ✓ Be alert to the medical needs of children with medical conditions;
- ✓ Understand our role in supporting the mental health and well-being of pupils – please see Appendix 1 – Mental Health;
- ✓ Operate robust and sensible health & safety procedures;
- ✓ Take all practicable steps to ensure that School premises are as secure as circumstances permit;
- ✓ Operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;
- ✓ Consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual pupils in our school or in our local area;
- ✓ Have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education in accordance with *Section 157 Education Act 2002* and associated regulations.
- ✓ Ensure pupils are safeguarded from harmful and inappropriate material online, including AI-generated harmful content (e.g., deepfakes or automated cyberbullying) using appropriate software and internet filters. The school will ensure that these filtering and monitoring systems are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness to ensure there is no over-blocking of valid educational materials and that all staff understand how to escalate concerns where identified. As per the school Mobile Phone Policy, phones will be collected during the school day. Further guidance can be found in the school's Online Safety Policy.
- ✓ Ensure that the school has at least 2 emergency contact details for each pupil on roll.
- ✓ Support children navigating gender identity in line with the latest DfE guidance in paragraphs 252-282 of KCSIE 2026.
- ✓ Protect staff and pupils working in a one-to-one situation, where there is more vulnerability to allegations.
- ✓ Promote a culture of respectful relationships throughout the school and ensure all pupils understand the need for healthy relationships of all kinds.

- ✓ Facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school or college and ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. We will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture where racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of our safeguarding responsibilities. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.
- ✓ Raise awareness of safeguarding issues with pupils, including online safety and other relevant aspects of sexual and personal relationships in PHSCE lessons, including the statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health education.
- ✓ Raise awareness with parents on how their children can stay safe online and provide some understanding of the systems we use to filter and monitor online use. We will also make parents aware of what their children are being asked to do online and whether they will be interacting with anyone.
- ✓ Process all personal information fairly and lawfully, fulfilling our obligations under UK data protection laws (including the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025). The school operates specific, streamlined procedures to acknowledge and investigate data protection or information-sharing complaints within 30 calendar days.

Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the School will be investigated in all circumstances and will be referred to an external agency such as the Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP), the Public Protection Investigation Unit of the Police (PPIU) or the NSPCC.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. *Anybody can make a referral* (see contact numbers in Appendix 2).

Associated Policies

The School has a number of other policies and procedures which should be read in conjunction with this policy including; Anti-Bullying, Physical Restraint, Staff Code of Conduct, Induction of New Staff, Online Safety, Behaviour, Discipline, Rewards and Sanctions, Missing Child, Whistle Blowing, Sexual Harassment and Abuse, Acceptable Use, Mental Health, Staff Internet Access as well as the Registration and Attendance Policies. These policies will be explained as part of the induction of new members of staff to ensure their understanding of their importance.

There is no use of Corporal punishment at Bridgewater School, and it is understood that this is illegal in all circumstances. The use of reasonable force is sometimes appropriate in order to safeguard pupils in school. Staff should refer to the school's Physical Restraint policy. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a

child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

Further details can be found in the guidance document *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (2026)*. Further information can also be found in the physical restraint policy.

2. Signs of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

The School recognises that some pupils may be the victims of neglect and/or physical, sexual or emotional abuse, exploitation or modern slavery and that staff of the School, by virtue of their day-to-day contact with and knowledge of the pupils in their care, are well placed to identify such abuse and offer support to children in need. The Law defines someone as a child until he or she is 18.

Abuse is the maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting or failing to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment both physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others e.g. domestic violence:

- ✓ **PHYSICAL** – for example beating or punching, hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling
- ✓ **EMOTIONAL** – for example rejection and denial of affection; it may also include name-calling, persistent criticism and belittling
- ✓ **SEXUAL** – for example sexual assault or encouraging a child to view sexually explicit material. Please see appendix A for full definition.
- ✓ **NEGLECT** – for example a failure to provide appropriate care including warmth, medical attention or adequate supervision.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will often overlap with one another. Pupils may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). All staff should also be aware that pupils may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected and they may or may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Where a pupil may be embarrassed or threatened, due to their vulnerability, disability or sexual orientation, this will not prevent staff from being professionally curious and raising issues with the DSL if they have concerns. Staff should best determine how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication with children.

Keeping Children, Safe in Education (2026) has identified, in addition to the terms above, specific safeguarding issues which include, Child Sexual

Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Domestic abuse, Sexual violence and harassment, Bullying and Cyber- Bullying, Faith Abuse, Radicalisation and Female Genital Mutilation – see Appendix 1].

In addition, the DFE advice *'What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused – Advice for Practitioners'* provides further information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect.

Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):

- ✓ the pupil says he/she has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference;
- ✓ there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries;
- ✓ the pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour;
- ✓ the pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons;
- ✓ the pupil's development is delayed;
- ✓ the pupil loses or gains weight;
- ✓ the pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed; and
- ✓ the pupil is reluctant to go home or has been openly rejected by his or her parents or carers.
- ✓ the pupil has a pattern of unexplainable and/or persistent absence from education. See also the Registration and Attendance Policy and the Missing Child Policy and Appendix 6.
- ✓ The pupil is missing in education – see **Children missing education 2025**
- ✓ the pupil shows signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being or has signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- ✓ the pupil has unexplained gifts or new possessions which may indicate involvement with criminal networks or gangs.
- ✓ the pupil is suffering from mental health issues which have been diagnosed by an appropriately trained professional or whose behaviour suggests they are at risk from experiencing problems.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Pupils with SEN may be more prone to isolation or bullying.
- Pupils with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or

deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of pupils should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a pupil's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. See link in Appendix 2

- Pupils can be at risk of exploitation outside of their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of forms including but not limited to sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse including physical, sexual, emotional abuse and stalking), criminal exploitation (including financial), serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.
- All staff should be aware of the risks associated with criminal involvement and serious violence and understand the measures in place to manage these. Further information is provided in the Home Office guidance outlined on page one of this policy.

Any member of staff who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred should follow the procedure as laid out in this document (see Section 4 Procedures).

Additionally, those pupils with an allocated social worker (CIN or CPP) are recognised as potentially at greater risk of harm. The DSL will ensure that we work with all relevant agencies to ensure that decisions are always made in the best interests of the child.

We recognise that LGB and gender questioning (LGBT+) pupils may well be targeted by other students although being LGB or gender questioning is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. We also recognise that pupils perceived to be LGBT+ (whether they are or not) may be equally vulnerable to those who identify as LGBT+. We recognise that such pupils need a trusted adult in whom to confide and a safe space to speak out and share their concerns. LGBT+ inclusion is part of the PHSCE scheme of work, and we cover resources that will help counter homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying and abuse. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Assistant Head EDI will act as trusted adults in the first instance and our allocated safe space will be the Pink Room.

We also recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and ensure that concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate

3. The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

3.1 The main responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead are:

- ✓ to be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection;
- ✓ to co-ordinate the child protection procedures in the School;
- ✓ to have responsibility for online safety within school and have a clear understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and to review these regularly with reference to the DfE filtering and monitoring standards.
- ✓ to maintain an on-going training programme for all School employees;
- ✓ to monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection; and
- ✓ to liaise with the Designated Person responsible for Child Protection appointed by Salford Council or other administrative regions.
- ✓ keep concerns and referrals in a separate CP file for each child and include a summary, actions and resolutions, decisions reached and rationale and outcome.
- ✓ to oversee and co-ordinate the School's implementation of the Prevent duty (see section 10 below).
- ✓ to ensure that the school has the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place to safeguard systems, staff and learners and to review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically
- ✓ to ensure that where activities are provided by a third party either to BWS pupils (or are using BWS facilities to provide a service to external pupils) that these organisations have appropriate safeguarding procedures in place and that there are procedures in place to liaise with the school on safeguarding issues.
- ✓ to follow all safeguarding procedures, including referring to the LADO, for any allegations pertaining to outside agencies using school facilities

3.2 The School's DSL for the whole school (including EYFS) is the Head Teacher, Mrs J A T Nairn, who can be contacted in person, by phone (0161 794 1463), or by email (nairnj@bwslive.co.uk)

She will:

- ✓ advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to her;
- ✓ when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm,' liaise with Local Authorities, the Police or other necessary external agencies immediately;
- ✓ Consult with the Governor responsible for Child Protection at Bridgewater, who is Mrs Kathryn Mort, who is also the Chair of Governors;
- ✓ Ensure that the School is represented at any relevant child protection conferences or, failing that, that a report is submitted to the conference from the School as required. She will also ensure that any recommendations made by the conference which involve school staff are carried out as agreed.

- 3.3 The DSL has undertaken Child Protection training and will attend refresher training at two yearly intervals. This will include the LSCB's protocols and training on the Prevent strategy, inter-agency working, participation in child-protection case conferences, understanding the impact on a child of adversity and trauma and how to promote educational outcomes in response to this, supporting children in need, identifying children at risk of radicalisation, online safety, record-keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children.
- 3.4 If the DSL is unavailable or is herself the subject of a complaint, her duties will be assumed by one of the deputies, who will be trained to the same level as the DSL updated every 2 years. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school or college's initial response:
- Deputy Head, Senior School (Pastoral) – Mr P Lyons
(lyonsp@bwslive.co.uk)
- Deputy Head, Senior School (Academic) – Mr. W. Amin
(aminw@bwslive.co.uk)
- Deputy Head, Prep Department – Mr M Rooney
(rooneym@bwslive.co.uk)
- Assistant Head, Learning Support – Ms Cheryl Hemmings
(hemmingsc@bwslive.co.uk)
- 3.5 The DSL and Deputies will ensure that all new staff will receive formal induction training which explains the safeguarding policy, including responsibility for online safety, the behaviour policy, the staff code of conduct policy, the response to children missing in education and the role of the DSL. See the Induction of New Staff policy.
- 3.6 The DSL will ensure that all staff are provided with and have read and understood and have agreed to follow this policy and Part 1 of KCSIE. The DSL will also ensure that all staff, and other relevant people connected with the School, will receive Child Protection training which is updated at least every 18 months in line with SSCP guidance together with regular informal updates at least annually. This will also include training on the LCSB's approach to the Prevent Strategy as well as online safety. The DSL will also ensure that KCSIE will be recirculated each time it is updated.
- 3.7 The DSL will ensure that all pupils receive appropriate education on safeguarding issues, including online safety, through such programmes as PSHCE and RS lessons. See also the cyber safety policy.
- 3.8 **Transferring records:** When a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan leaves the School the DSL will inform the pupil's new school immediately and discuss with the pupil's key worker the transfer of any confidential information the school may hold. The DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information

that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. For new pupils coming to Bridgewater School, we will request all safeguarding records including a nil return if appropriate.

- 3.9 The designated staff for looked after children are Mrs J A T Nairn (Head Teacher) and Ms C Hemmings (Assistant Head EDI). They will also have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

4. Procedures

All staff should at all times follow the guidelines and requirements of the School's Code of Conduct for Staff.

- 4.1 In the event of a concern, or a complaint of abuse of any kind being reported a staff-member must:

- ✓ listen carefully to the pupil concerned and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not any abuse has taken place;
- ✓ recognise that this initial disclosure may be the first incident reported rather than being a singular incident and that trauma may impact a pupil's memory of all details or timeline of abuse;
- ✓ recognise that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting abuse because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/ or sexual orientation;
- ✓ never ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer;
- ✓ reassure the pupil but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to the DSL who will ensure that the correct action is taken;
- ✓ reassure the pupil that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. The pupil will be assured that they are not creating a problem, nor will they be made to feel ashamed in any way.
- ✓ keep a brief but accurate written record of the conversation. Best practice is to wait until the end of the conversation before writing up the report in order to devote full attention to the pupil. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The report should only record the facts as presented by the pupil and should not reflect the personal opinion of the note-taker. The record

should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. This record should be recorded on the school's on-line safeguarding software "My concern" and sent to the Headteacher/DSL. Access to these records is on a 'need to know' basis and decisions about access will be made by the Head Teacher.

- ✓ inform the DSL of the concern immediately.
- ✓ In the event of a pupil in immediate danger or risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care (Salford 0161 603 4500) or the home authority of the child and/or the police (999) immediately before informing the DSL. The DSL should be informed ASAP that a referral has been made.

NB: The School should not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a pupil a leading question or attempting to investigate allegations of abuse or indeed confronting alleged perpetrators.

4.2 Preserving evidence - a record of all concerns, discussions and related decisions should, wherever possible, be made in writing. All evidence - for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers - must, as far as is possible, be safeguarded and preserved.

4.3 Whistleblowing: The School wishes to generate a culture of safety and of raising concerns.

The School is committed to a transparent culture of safety where staff feel empowered to raise concerns. Staff must immediately report any concern regarding the conduct or practices of a colleague, volunteer, or contractor that may put pupils at risk.

- Concerns regarding staff behaviour must be reported directly to the **Head Teacher**.
- Concerns regarding the Head Teacher must be reported directly to the **Chair of Governors**.
- There will be no professional retribution or disciplinary action taken against any individual who raises a concern in good faith.

If a member of staff feels a safeguarding concern regarding an adult in the school has not been dealt with appropriately internally, they can contact the national **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line** directly on **0800 028 0285** or via email at help@nspcc.org.uk. (see Whistleblowing policy)

5. Action by the DSL

The DSL will have a number of options open when a report is made including:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's own Pastoral support processes;

- a community-based and universal services early assessment which will provide support to help a family's resilience and outcomes or reduce the chance of a problem getting worse.
- a referral for statutory services, for example, as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering or likely to suffer harm.

5.1 Any action to be taken will take into account:

- ✓ the local inter-agency procedures of the Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP), as detailed on their website www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/ or other home authority.
- ✓ the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint, taking note of the local threshold documents and protocols of assessment (A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to the relevant Designated Officer (LADO) and/or the Police without further investigation within the School.);
- ✓ the distinction between safeguarding children who have suffered, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and those who are in need of additional support from one or more agencies. The former should be reported to Children's Social Care immediately. The latter should lead to early help inter-agency assessment and intervention using local processes including use of the 'Common Assessment Framework' (CAF) and 'Team Around The Child' (TAC) approaches;
- ✓ the wishes of a pupil who has complained, provided that the pupil is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a pupil's wishes;
- ✓ the wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the pupil's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the DSL is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a pupil at risk, she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose, taking into account:
 - duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable; and
 - the lawful rights and interests of the School community as a whole, including its employees and its insurers.

5.2 Referral guidelines:

Note: Bridgewater School operates in accordance with the overarching safeguarding procedures and guidelines of Salford local authority although we recognise that our pupil intake spans multiple administrative boundaries. For the purposes of reporting child protection and safeguarding concerns, the school will strictly apply the "Home Authority Rule"

Overarching Framework: The school's internal reporting mechanisms and staff expectations remain uniform as set out in this policy. **Statutory Referrals:** In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, all statutory referrals (including Section 17 Child in Need or Section 47 Child Protection concerns) will be directed to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Children's Social Care team of the local authority where the child permanently resides.

Threshold Evaluation: The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs will evaluate indicators of harm against the specific "Threshold of Need" matrix published by the child's home Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).

Allegations Against Staff: Any safeguarding allegation made against a staff member, volunteer, or contractor will be handled via the Salford LADO. If the victim or affected child resides in a different local authority area, that child's home MASH will be notified concurrently as part of the multi-agency response.

Escalation: In the event that the DSL needs to formally challenge a decision made by Children's Social Care, the school will initiate the specific Professional Disagreement / Escalation Protocol of the child's home SSCP.

The child's safety and the statutory thresholds always override internal preferences or parental objections.

The DSL has a number of intervention pathways when a report is received;

These options include:

- **Internal Support:** Managing lower-level welfare concerns internally via the school's pastoral and inclusion infrastructure.
- **Early Help Assessment (EHA):** Initiating a coordinated, multi-agency Early Help plan to build family resilience and prevent escalation.
- **Statutory Safeguarding Referral:** Triggering an immediate formal referral to Children's Social Care where a child is identified as being a Child in Need (Section 17) or suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (Section 47).

Threshold and Multi-Agency Alignment

Any action taken by the school will strictly align with:

- The statutory, localized inter-agency procedures established by the Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).
- The current Salford multi-agency threshold guidance. Any concern or complaint indicating that a serious criminal offence has been committed against a child will be referred directly to the Police and Salford Children's Social Care immediately, without any prior internal investigation by the school.
- The explicit legal distinction between an Early Help intervention and an immediate child protection crisis. Children suspected of experiencing significant harm will be reported to the Salford Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) immediately. Cases requiring lower-level, coordinated support will utilize the local **Early Help Assessment (EHA)** and **Team Around the Family (TAF)** pathways.
- The wishes and feelings of the child, balanced against their age, maturity, and understanding. While the school will always strive to work collaboratively, **the child's safety is the paramount consideration and will explicitly override a pupil's or parent's wishes if withholding a referral leaves the child at risk of harm.**

If the DSL believes that informing parents of a safeguarding concern would place the child at immediate or increased risk of harm, she will seek immediate advice from Salford MASH before making contact with the family.

If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the DSL will consult in all cases with Salford Mash the Designated Officer (LADO), or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis to determine the safest path forward.

5.3 Referral Procedures and timelines

As soon as sufficient concern exists that a pupil may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made **without delay**. If the initial referral is made by telephone, the DSL will confirm the referral in writing to the relevant Children Services Team of local Social Services within **24 hours**. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the DSL will contact the above agencies again within a further 24 hours.

Should a referral be made the statutory guidance as outlined in pages 17-20 of the DFE's *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)* is to be followed by both the School and Children's Social Care. (See the flowchart in Appendix 4).

In an emergency situation, the Police will be called whenever a pupil is considered to be in a position of immediate risk.

There is a statutory duty for an individual teacher to report to the Police if it is discovered that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under the age of 18. They must also inform the DSL or one of her deputies immediately.

5.4 Early Help Assessments: In some cases, the DSL may consider if an 'Early Help Assessment' (EHA) is needed rather than a direct referral to the appropriate Safeguarding Unit. An Early Help Assessment generates co-ordinated support from more than one agency (School, Health, Housing, and Police) via an inter-agency assessment as requested by the DSL. A request for an Early Help Assessment might follow school-based intervention(s) such as Mentoring Plans, Welfare Plans, Counselling, CAF or CAHMS referrals.

5.5 Any child may benefit from early help, but particular attention should be given to children

- with disabilities/additional needs including SEND,
- who are young carers,
- questioning their gender identity,
- with a mental health need,
- who appear to show anti-social or criminal behaviour and gang membership or county lines,
- who go missing from home,
- misusing drugs/alcohol,
- in families misusing drugs/alcohol,
- at risk of modern slavery
- who have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of being permanently excluded and placed in alternative provision.
- who are pregnant or young parents
- exhibiting early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviours
- who are frequently missing from education or home
- who are at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- who have a parent/carer in custody
- who are at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as FGM or Forced Marriage.
- who are privately fostered

6. Working with External Agencies

UK data protection laws and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Further details on information sharing can be found in Appendix 5

6.1 Bridgewater School recognises that it is an agent of referral and not investigation. It fully accepts that the investigation of child abuse is the responsibility of the Social Services Department and the Police and will do everything possible to support and assist them in their task.

6.2 We will endeavour to build relationships with other agencies so that understanding trust and confidence can be built which will help to secure effective co-operation in cases of actual or suspected abuse. In line with the statutory framework Working Together to Safeguard Children, we operate in full cooperation with the three core safeguarding partners for our area:

- The Local Authority
- The Chief Officer of Police (Greater Manchester Police)
- The local Integrated Care Board (ICB)

Consideration will also be made to the guidance NSPCC- *When to Call the Police*. Where we are named as a relevant agency, we will fully cooperate with any published arrangements. We recognise that multi-agency early help works best when working alongside school policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers. We acknowledge the integral part that the school should play in helping to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered as part of our local arrangements. The school will familiarise itself with the local threshold of need document published by our local safeguarding partners

6.3 Where a concern has been managed internally and does not meet external statutory thresholds, the school will work transparently with families. If appropriate and safe to do so, the school will provide parents and pupils with relevant information regarding how to access external support or self-refer to local agency services. However, if the DSL believes that notifying parents or providing written correspondence regarding a safeguarding concern would place a child at increased risk of harm, tip off an alleged perpetrator, or interfere with a potential police investigation, communication will be withheld in accordance with direct advice from Salford MASH.

6.4 If after a referral the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL or person who made the referral should press for reconsideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed.

7. Allegations against Staff including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors

7.1 The School procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children) aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. All procedures are in line with Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education "There are two levels of concern; those that meet the harms threshold and those concerns of a low-level that do not meet the harms threshold."

For the purposes of this policy a person would be deemed to pose a risk of harm if they

- *Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child*
- *Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child*
- *Behaved in a way that suggests they may pose a risk to children*
- *Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, including in relation to their own children or children within their household, or if, for example, there is an allegation of domestic violence.*

7.2 Detailed guidance is given to staff and volunteers to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil. This guidance is contained in this Policy, in the Staff Handbook, in the separate policy "Code of Conduct for Staff" and is an integral feature of Safeguarding training provided by the School.

7.3 Where an allegation or complaint is made against any other member of staff, including trainee teachers, supply staff, or a volunteer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head Teacher or to one of the Deputy DSLs in her absence. Where there may be a conflict of interest in making such a report to the Head Teacher, the allegation should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

7.4 Immediate action should be taken to protect the child or children involved. Advice can be sought from the Salford LADO. The welfare of the child is always paramount.

7.5 The Head Teacher will not undertake any investigation of allegations without prior consultation with the Salford LADO, or, in the most serious cases, the Police and any further action must be agreed. These discussions should be recorded in writing. Prior to contacting the LADO, the school will (in line with local procedures) conduct basic enquiries to establish facts that will help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegations.

Where it is identified that

- A child has been harmed
- There may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or
- If the situation is an emergency

The DSL or a deputy will contact children's social care and the police as appropriate.

7.6 Suspension of the member of staff involved will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:

- ✓ the safety and welfare of the pupils or pupil concerned; and
- ✓ the need for a full and fair investigation

7.7 Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Head Teacher, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chair of Governors who is also the Governor responsible for Child Protection Mrs Kathryn Mort, without first notifying the Head Teacher.

7.8 If the School ceases to use the services of a member of staff (or a governor or volunteer) because they are considered unsuitable to work with children, a compromise agreement will not be used and there will be a prompt and detailed report made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) immediately. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay. We are aware that this is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

7.9 In addition to the School's commitment to report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), in instances where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned), the School also has a statutory obligation to consider making a referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA). A referral to the TRA would include behaviours deemed as 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence'.

7.10 When an allegation is made and investigated, details will be kept on file, with a note on how it was resolved and any action taken. Where a claim is substantiated, the following records will be kept on file and used in references provided the claims are factual and free from opinions:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- A note of any actions taken and decisions reached as well as whether the allegation was substantiated, unsubstantiated or unfounded
- A copy provided to the person involved, where agreed by children's social care or the police
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

Where substantiated records will be "preserved for the term of the Independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or 10 years from the date of the allegation if it is longer".

Where allegations are not substantiated, these will not be referred to in employer references.

7.11 Details of any allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from the staff file. A pupil making such a malicious allegation may be liable to suspension or permanent exclusion, as well as referral to the Police if it is believed that a criminal offence has been committed.

7.12 Where an allegation is made against a member of supply staff we will ensure that this is investigated promptly, finding out the full facts and liaising with the LADO to ascertain a suitable outcome. The school will also liaise with the supply agency to discuss redeploying or suspending the supply member of staff until this outcome is reached. Agencies will be kept fully informed and we will take the lead in ensuring information from

the LADO is passed on. The process for investigating allegations will be supplied to the agency as required.

7.13 It should be recognised that any allegation will result in an extremely stressful experience for the member of staff concerned as well as their family members. Welfare support will be offered to attempt to minimise any stress caused by the situation.

7.14 Where allegations do not meet the threshold for harm:

In order to create an open and transparent culture of safeguarding in the school, we seek to identify potential inappropriate or problematic behaviours. Such nagging concerns, whilst not on their own harmful, may indicate that a member of staff needs some guidance to prevent problems from escalating as their behaviour is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct. Low level concerns will be reported to the Head Teacher but will not be serious enough to refer to the LADO.

Low-level concerns are any concerns, no matter how small, which may cause a sense of unease or "nagging doubt" that an adult working in or on behalf of the school acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate contact outside school and does not meet the allegations threshold for a referral to the LADO.

Although the following is not exhaustive, such concerns might include:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having pupil favourites
- Using a personal mobile phone to take photographs without permission or not uploading them to the school's system and then deleting the images
- Having one to one individual meetings in secluded locations
- Making flippant, inappropriate or offensive remarks
- Humiliating pupils

The school encourages self-referrals as well as the reporting on these matters and such incidents will be recorded and placed on file alongside any action or guidance given. See also the staff code of conduct.

Where concerns are raised to the Head Teacher (or Deputy in her absence) she will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person raising the concern as well as reviewing any other information available. Witnesses and the individual concerned will not be investigated until it has been determined that the harm threshold has not been met. Where a low-level concern has been established, the Head Teacher (or Deputy) will

- speak with the staff member involved to offer constructive guidance to address the behaviour to ensure compliance with the Staff Code of Conduct
- record in writing the details of the concern explaining the context in which it arose, any evidence collected and any decision made

categorising the concern, any action taken, the rationale for such action and the name of the individual raising any concerns, if available.

Anonymous reports will also be accepted, logged accordingly and treated with respect. Where a low-level concern is shared about supply staff or a contractor, this will be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of behaviour are identified. If there is any doubt about whether a concern is low-level, the school will consult with the Salford LADO.

Records will be processed fairly and lawfully and held securely in compliance with UK data protection laws and GDPR. Such records will be reviewed to identify any patterns of concerning behaviour. Where there is a pattern identified the school should either take action through the disciplinary procedures or if meeting the harms threshold, report the issue to the LADO. The school will also review procedures and give consideration as to whether there are any wider cultural issues that enabled any problematic behaviour to occur. If identified appropriate policies and procedures will be drawn up and training delivered to minimise future incidents of reoccurrence. The school will retain any records of such actions until the individual reaches normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer, which mirrors the retention period for substantiated allegations.

8. Allegations against Pupils (Including Child on Child Abuse including harassment and violence and)

This section should be read in conjunction with the School's **Anti-Bullying Policy** and the **Sexual Harassment and Abuse policy**, which detail the procedures required to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse. All staff should be 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 or initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- serious physical assault or harm or the threat of harm with a weapon
- gender based violence
- Misogyny and misandry
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents
- sexual harassment including up-skirting (which is a criminal offence), sexual remarks or "jokes".
- youth-produced sexual imagery- the consensual or non-consensual creation, sharing or viewing of nude or semi-nude images or pornography, including those generated using AI.
- abuse in intimate, personal relationships including coercive control, psychological or physical harm.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- sexual violence including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault, including using any online elements.
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes including online.

The school will not tolerate a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are accepted. To tackle these issues the school will assume that sexual harassment and online abuse are happening, even where there are no reports, and ensure that we address these at whole-school level. We understand that many children now have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via their mobile phones (e.g. 3G, 4G and 5G). Some children will abuse these networks to sexually harass their peers, share indecent images either consensually or non-consensually and view or share pornography or other harmful content. The school Mobile Phone Policy dictates that phones should be collected in during the day and are not to be used in school.

Staff should be clear as to the school policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. There will be zero tolerance approach to any incidents of child-on-child abuse. Such incidents will be thoroughly investigated and not merely be passed off as banter. All staff must remain vigilant to the seriousness of these matters and not assume that they could not happen at Bridgewater School. We all acknowledge the important role they we have to play in preventing harm and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from any such matters. Staff must also acknowledge that incidents can occur between two children of any age and sex throughout the school. Such incidents may occur in school or outside school and online.

We strive to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse. We have adopted an attitude that "it could happen here" and implemented age-appropriate curriculum content that makes children aware of abuse from peers. We have also developed a safe listening environment where pupils feel confident about disclosing concerns and promote a clear message through all school staff that "abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but stress that all child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Staff will challenge any potential abusive behaviours and must report any concerns to the DSL. All child-on-child abuse will be seen as a safeguarding issue for both the perpetrator and victim.

Allegations of child-on-child abuse will follow safeguarding procedures, as set out in this policy. They will be recorded and if an incident of child-on-child abuse is initially recorded as a behavioural incident this will be later re-categorised and stored in the safeguarding records. If at any point the allegation indicates a potential crime has been committed, the police will be contacted. We work closely with wider partners and Local Authorities to provide support for the perpetrator and victim. If necessary, risk assessments will be taken regarding supervision of the victim and perpetrator at all stages

In keeping an open mind on these issues, we seek to understand the possible scale of harassment and abuse and not downplay any behaviours related to abuse as this may lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. The school recognises that even when there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse we will not assume that this is not happening.

Support for those concerned will be tailored on a case-by-case basis and the proportionality of the response will be carefully gauged. Support for those concerned, including victims and perpetrators, will be carefully considered. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape. The school recognises the incredible importance of how it responds to such reports because of the impact it will have on the confidence of this victim or future victims to report or come forward with other information.

- 8.1** In the event of a disclosure of abuse against a pupil by another pupil, or pupils, all pupils involved, whether perpetrator or victim, will be treated as at risk. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and alleged perpetrator. Any victim will be reassured that their complaint is being taken seriously, and they will be supported and kept safe. They will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report. The school will assure the victim that the law is in place to protect rather than criminalise them by explaining procedures in a way that does not alarm them. Confidentiality will not be promised but reports will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Interviews will be conducted as per Section 4.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the school. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously.

- 8.2** A pupil at Bridgewater against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation and the School's Behaviour Policy will apply. A risk assessment will be considered and recorded if appropriate. When there has been a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. This assessment should consider

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other victims,
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and
- all the other pupils, (and if appropriate, staff) at the school especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms
- the importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following such incidents

The risk assessment should be kept under review.

8.3 The School will take advice from Salford Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse, the school will ensure that, subject to the advice of the LADO, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

8.4 When responding to a report of child on child abuse the DSL will have a number of important considerations (for situations involving Sexual Harassment and Abuse please refer to the sexual harassment and abuse policy)

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children and the victim's preference to keep an incident internal cannot override the school's statutory duty to protect the child and the wider community.
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed;
- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff; and,
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation

The DSL will also need to consider carefully when to inform the alleged perpetrator of the allegation. When social care or the police are involved, this will generally be discussed with these agencies first, although where necessary immediate safeguarding steps will be taken to protect the victim.

8.5 **Informing parents:** Parents will normally be kept informed as appropriate of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the DSL will need to consult the LADO and/or the Head Teacher before discussing details with parents.

8.6 There are a number of scenarios to consider when managing the outcomes of a report (for additional detail please see the Sexual Harassment and Abuse policy)

- i. Manage internally – making it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to any issue of sexual violence or harassment. We also recognise that we can manage a report internally whilst also seeking early help from our local safeguarding partners.
- ii. Early help referral
- iii. Referrals to children's social care
- iv. Reporting to the Police
- v. Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports - all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing.

8.7 " Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery" means the taking and sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It can also involve sharing between devices offline. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images or videos can be a signal that children are at risk.

8.8 The School treats all incidences of" youth-produced sexual imagery" as safeguarding matters to be actioned in accordance with this policy. Full detailed procedures of dealing with such matters can be found in the e-safety policy.

8.9 Members of staff must not intentionally view, copy, print or share any nude or semi-nude images which are disclosed to them under any circumstances. In referencing any incident of such images, members of staff should describe the content of the images as reported to them.

- 8.10 The DSL may in exceptional circumstances view images when
- deciding whether to involve other agencies, as there is insufficient information available as to its contents;
 - reporting the image to a website or reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support a student or parent in making a report; or
 - a student has reported the image directly to a member of staff in circumstances where viewing the image is unavoidable or images have been found on the school's devices or network.

Further information can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

9. Support for Pupils, Staff and Families

9.1 For any pupil undergoing a Child Protection Referral and investigation the need for support will be great, potentially long-lasting and the School will supply as much support as possible. We aim at least to provide a secure classroom environment in which the pupil feels valued and protected and will make other support available where appropriate, including a family help assessment where required. We will avoid actions that may isolate the victim and also implement internal adjustments to protect the pupil's daily experience, if the victim believes this would make it easier to

manage a potential situation. The School will work with the local authority and other agencies as required.

- 9.2 The DSL team will maintain an open-door policy for all teaching and support staff to provide immediate debriefing following a challenging disclosure or safeguarding incident.
- 9.3 The School will offer support where possible to the family of a pupil or pupils involved in a protection investigation within the time and expertise constraints of its role and always remembering the limits of confidentiality and the fact that it is the welfare of the child that is paramount. The school will also provide safeguarding supervision for the DSL, Deputy DSLs, and key pastoral staff to review case management and protect emotional health.
- 9.4 Any decisions about safeguarding will take into account the needs and wishes of the victim (alongside protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them. (For details on support in the event of sexual harassment cases please see the sexual harassment and abuse policy)

10. Preventing Radicalisation

- 10.1 The School takes seriously its responsibilities laid out in the *Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023)*. It is committed to take all necessary steps to protect its pupils from the threat of radicalisation. The School's single point of contact for overseeing and co-ordinating its implementation of this duty is the DSL, Mrs J A T Nairn.
- 10.2 The DSL will ensure that the School has in place a system to assess the general level of risk of its pupils being subject to radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism/extremist activity and will liaise with the Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) for advice and support and for their assessment of general levels of risk within the local area.
- 10.3 When concerns are raised about a pupil (or pupils) in this context, the DSL will decide when it is appropriate to make a referral and will complete a formal regional Prevent Referral Form. This form should be submitted directly to The Bridge Partnership (Salford's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or the Greater Manchester Police Prevent Team.
- 10.4 The DSL will undertake appropriate Prevent awareness training and will ensure that, as part of the School's regular Child Protection training programme, all staff also have appropriate Prevent awareness training to be able to recognise and respond appropriately to the threat of radicalisation, making use of the GOV.UK statutory Prevent duty training platform modules (Awareness, Referrals, and Channel) alongside the National College resources. The DSL will ensure that staff are trained on modern digital radicalisation threats and localized risks as defined by the

Salford Counter-Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) The DSL and deputies will receive more in-depth training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels.

10.5 The DSL will ensure that other School policies, including specifically its ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Safer Recruitment Policy, contain provisions to keep its pupils safe from terrorist and extremist material.

10.6 The DSL will ensure that the School's academic curriculum, specifically in subjects such as PSHE, RE, History, includes relevant teaching matter to actively promote, maintain and reinforce British values and to build resilience to radical and extremist views. This will involve teaching pupils how to critically evaluate online information, recognize digital grooming, and challenge extremist rhetoric safely. They will also ensure that potential danger signals, such as periods of extended or repeated absence are monitored and reported.

11. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Provision

11.1 The school pays strict regard to the mandatory requirements set out in the current Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, specifically Section 3 (The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements). The school also ensures full compliance with the current DfE statutory guidance Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 for all staff engaged in early years or later years wraparound care.

11.2 The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the EYFS setting and for liaising with local statutory children's agencies as appropriate.

11.3 Use of mobile devices within EYFS:

- To maintain data security and protect pupils from digital exploitation, the school operates a zero-tolerance policy regarding the use of personal recording equipment: Absolute Ban on Personal Devices: Staff are strictly prohibited from using personal mobile phones, personal tablets, or personal cameras to take photographs or record videos of EYFS pupils under any circumstances.
- Mandatory Use of School Hardware: Photographic evidence of children's learning journeys, achievements, or developmental milestones must be captured exclusively using school-owned, encrypted devices (such as school iPads or digital cameras).
- Secure Platform Uploads: Images destined for parent portals, specialized educational software (such as the Tapestry system), or official school social media accounts must be processed directly on school systems. Staff must verify every image against the school's Central Image Consent Register before publication to ensure no pupil with restricted imagery rights is visible.

External Volunteers and Trips: While on educational visits or school trips, parent helpers and volunteers are strictly forbidden from using personal

mobile devices to capture images or videos of any children. School staff will manage all photography using designated school equipment.

12 The Role of the Governing Body

12.1 The Board of Governors will facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development and that all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

12.2 The Board of Governors will nominate a Governor to be responsible for child protection issues – currently Mrs Kathryn Mort. In the absence of the nominated Governor, any urgent matter should be brought to the attention of the Vice Chair of Governors. She will liaise, when necessary, with the DSL regarding any allegations of abuse.

12.3 The Board of Governors, through the Compliance Committee, will guarantee that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and operational procedures are legally compliant, fully implemented, and understood by all staff.

Mandatory Staff Reading: The Board will ensure that all staff, both teaching and support, are provided with and explicitly confirm they have read and understood Part 1 of the current statutory Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance in full, alongside the current "Part One: Overview for all Staff" supplementary document, at induction and whenever statutory updates occur.

Vetting and Single Central Record (SCR) Audits: In accordance with the Independent School Standards, the Board of Governors maintains ultimate responsibility for safer recruitment. The nominated safeguarding governor will conduct regular, formal, and documented audits of the school's Single Central Record (SCR) to verify that all mandatory pre-employment checks, prohibition orders, and enhanced DBS data are recorded flawlessly.

Annual Governance Review: The Compliance Committee will complete a formal, comprehensive annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements. This review will be debated, signed off, and recorded by the full Board of Governors to test the efficiency and legality of our child protection infrastructure.

12.4 Should a complaint be made to any Governor about action by the Head Teacher or any other member of staff of a child protection nature, it should be passed immediately to the Governor responsible for Child Protection who will make contact with the Salford LADO within 24 hours without alerting the Head Teacher first.

12.5 The Board of Governors will ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction. All governors will also receive regular, documented annual safeguarding updates and specialized Prevent Duty instruction. This should equip governors with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves

that the safeguarding procedures in place are effective and support a robust school approach to safeguarding.

12.6 The Governors will receive annually a report on changes to the Safeguarding Children Policy and/or any associated procedures, training undertaken by the DSL and other staff; and the number of incidents/cases arising in the past year (anonymised).

12.7 The Governors will ensure that the school has appropriate electronic filtering and monitoring systems in place and that their effectiveness is regularly reviewed. Effectiveness will be informed by consideration of the Prevent Duty and the guidance found in the UK Safer Internet Centre's appropriate filtering and monitoring guidance as well as the DfE's 'plan technology for your school service'.

Annual Documented Review: In line with the UK Safer Internet Centre standards and the DfE Digital Standards for Schools, the governing body will complete, approve, and formally record a written Filtering and Monitoring Effectiveness Review at least once per academic year. Records of checks will be retained and reviewed.

Modern Threat Oversight: This review will assess the system's resilience against modern online harms, check for over-blocking of valid curriculum materials, and ensure robust tracking protocols are active regarding the safe, supervised use of Generative AI software platforms within the school.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed by the Governors, the Compliance Committee, the Head Teacher and the Senior Management Team – September 2026

Policy approved by:



JAT Nairn
Head Teacher & Designated Safeguarding Lead



K Mort
Chair of Governors & Safeguarding Governor

Appendix 1

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example, NSPCC offers information for schools and colleges on the TES website and also on its own website www.nspcc.org.uk. Schools and colleges can also access broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website and in annex A of KCSIE:

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own), it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a concern for professionals who

encounter cases where pupils are manipulated, groomed and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing. Further information about CSE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex A of KCSIE.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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. Children involved in criminal exploitation should have their vulnerability recognised by adults and professionals and should be treated as victims. It is not possible for children to give informed consent to engage in criminal or other exploitative activity and they cannot give consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Further information about CCE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex A (KCSIE).

Child on Child Abuse (including harassment and violence) All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child on child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);

- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of youth produced sexual imagery including AI deep fakes and or videos (also known as sexting);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element). All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

County lines- County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network. One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third

sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation. Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office in their guidance 'Home Office and the Children's Society County Lines Toolkit for Professionals'.

Serious violence All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see KCSIE part 1).

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

Honour or faith-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage) So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions - If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female

genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police FGM mandatory reporting duty for 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 along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.¹⁰⁵ Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage - Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Since February 2023, it is now a crime to carry out any conduct, and not only coercion, threats or violence that will force a child into marriage before their 18th birthday. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and multi-agency guidelines, pages 32-36 of which focus on the role of schools and colleges. Further guidance can also be found in *the right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage* (www.gov.co.uk). School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

Mental Health- (see the school mental health policy also) All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an

indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, 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.

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. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support; this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in school's guidance; colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See Rise Above for links to all materials and lesson plans.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Children and the court system- Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year-olds and 12-17-year-olds.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds>

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children absent from education All staff should be aware that children going missing, either for a prolonged period or on repeated occasions, without explanation, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may

indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All staff should read the attendance and admissions policy for school.

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

- have been registered in accordance with a local authority attendance order and another school has been substituted by the local education authority, or arrangements have been made for the child to receive full-time education otherwise than at school.
- have been registered at another school.
- have been registered at more than one school and he/she has ceased to attend this school and the proprietor of the school where he/she has also been registered has given consent.
- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have been granted leave of absence exceeding ten school days and have failed to return to school within the next ten school days and that there are not any reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend school due to sickness or other unavoidable cause and after jointly making enquiries with the local authority they have failed to ascertain where the pupil is.
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- have been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than twenty school days and the absence has not been authorised and there are not reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend school due to sickness or other unavoidable cause and that the school and the local authority have been unable to ascertain where the pupil is
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period;
- have died;
- have ceased to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and the relevant person has indicated that they will cease to attend the school;
- have ceased to be a pupil at the school;
- have been permanently excluded; or
- where the pupil has received nursery education and has not transferred to reception or higher class – where the child is of compulsory age.

The local authority must be notified when a school is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, but no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that local authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect. All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days following a period of approved leave or is absent for 20 consecutive school days without approved leave.

Children with family members in prison- Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Cybercrime - 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). Offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (CMA) have risen substantially.

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. 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.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse

and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.
Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

Domestic abuse- 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. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Operation Encompass- Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England and Wales. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that police will notify a child's educational setting and the local authorities where they believe an incident of domestic abuse has occurred. This will include all children in the household, whether present or not during the incident. The police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. This information sharing will not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Information shared by the police must be kept securely in line with data protection laws.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline- Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked. Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects

Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children

Safe Lives: young people and domestic abuse.

Homelessness- Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace

a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people, and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism- Modern slavery encompasses exploitation, including sexual exploitation, criminal financial exploitation, human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance.

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK

Sexual abuse: involves forcing, causing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include noncontact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual

abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

See KCSIE (2026) Part 1 and Annex A

The following resources, plus many more listed in Annex A, may also help schools and colleges understand and teach about safeguarding:

DfE advice for schools: teaching online safety in schools

Generative AI: product safety expectations

UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) 37 guidance: Education for a connected world

UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

The UKCIS external visitors' guidance will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors

National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: Thinkuknow

Public Health England: Every Mind Matters

Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes - this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.

LGFL "Undressed" provides advice on how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (in collaboration with the Home Office) has developed the 'Shore Space' site which helps to prevent harmful sexual behaviour. This includes a chat service which supports young people who are worried about their own or someone else's sexual behaviours and thoughts.

Responding to children who display sexualised behaviour – provides advice on responding to children who display sexualised behaviour

Appendix 2

Key Contacts

School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Mrs J A T Nairn – 0161 794 1463; nairnj@bwslive.co.uk

School Nominated Governor for Safeguarding:

Mrs Kathryn Mort – via school office 0161 794 1463

Chair of School Governors:

Mrs Kathryn Mort – via school office 0161 794 1463

Salford Designated Officer (LADO):

Liz Peppiatt – elizabeth.peppiatt@salford.gov.uk

Caroline Bryson – caroline.bryson@salford.gov.uk

Steve Westhead – stephen.westhead@salford.gov.uk

0161 603 4350/ LADO@salford.gov.uk

Salford Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP): (The Bridge)

0161 603 4500; worriedaboutachild@salford.gov.uk

Tel: 0161 794 8888 – out of hours number

For pupils out of Salford area a list of Social Services Child Protection Units is kept in the school office. Out of school hours contact Salford (tel numbers above) ask for the Duty Officer who will provide telephone numbers for other Local Authority Social Services.

GMP Public Protection Investigation Unit (PPIU):

For referrals/consultation about crime related safeguarding concerns 0161 856 5171.

NSPCC:

Child Protection Helpline – 0800 028 0285 and the email is help@nspcc.org.uk

DfE Extremism Helpline

020 7340 7264

counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Contextual Safeguarding

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

Support for those with Special Educational Needs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm

<https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/> - non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: [Find your local IAS service \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](#)

- [Mencap](#) - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people
- [NSPCC - Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\)](#) and [NSPCC - Safeguarding child protection/deaf and disabled children and young people](#)

Appendix 3

Radicalisation Indicators

Vulnerability

- Identity Crisis - Distance from cultural/ religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them
- Personal Crisis – Family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – Migration; local community tensions; events affecting country or region of origin; alienation from UK values; having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspirations – Perceptions of injustice; feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Criminality – Experiences of imprisonment; poor resettlement/ reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups

Access to extremism / extremist influences

- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person associates with those known to be involved in extremism - either because they associate directly with known individuals or because they frequent key locations where these individuals are known to operate? (e.g. the child/young person is the partner, spouse, friend or family member of someone believed to be linked with extremist activity)
- Does the child/young person frequent, or is there evidence to suggest that they are accessing the internet for the purpose of extremist activity? (e.g. Use of closed network groups, access to or distribution of extremist material, contact associates covertly via Skype/email etc)
- Is there reason to believe that the child/young person has been or is likely to be involved with extremist/ military training camps/ locations?
- Is the child/young person known to have possessed or is actively seeking to possess and/ or distribute extremist literature/ other media material likely to incite racial/ religious hatred or acts of violence?
- Does the child/young person sympathise with, or support illegal/illicit groups e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?
- Does the child/young person support groups with links to extremist activity but not illegal/illicit e.g. propaganda distribution, fundraising and attendance at meetings?

Experiences, Behaviours and Influences

- Has the child/ young person encountered peer, social, family or faith group rejection?
- Is there a pattern of repeated or extended absence?
- Is there evidence of extremist ideological, political or religious influence on the child/ young person from within or outside UK?

- Have international events in areas of conflict and civil unrest had a personal impact on the child/ young person resulting in a noticeable change in behaviour? It is important to recognise that many people may be emotionally affected by the plight of what is happening in areas of conflict (i.e. images of children dying) it is important to differentiate them from those that sympathise with or support extremist activity
- Has there been a significant shift in the child/ young person's behaviour or outward appearance that suggests a new social/political or religious influence?
- Has the child/ young person come into conflict with family over religious beliefs/lifestyle/ dress choices?
- Does the child/ young person vocally support terrorist attacks; either verbally or in their written work?
- Has the child/ young person witnessed or been the perpetrator/ victim of racial or religious hate crime or sectarianism?

Travel

- Is there a pattern of regular or extended travel within the UK, with other evidence to suggest this is for purposes of extremist training or activity?
- Has the child/ young person travelled for extended periods of time to international locations known to be associated with extremism?
- Has the child/ young person employed any methods to disguise their true identity? Has the child/ young person used documents or cover to support this?

Social Factors

- Does the child/ young person have experience of poverty, disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion?
- Does the child/ young person experience a lack of meaningful employment appropriate to their skills?
- Does the child/ young person display a lack of affinity or understanding for others, or social isolation from peer groups?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate identity conflict and confusion normally associated with youth development?
- Does the child/ young person have any learning difficulties/ mental health support needs?
- Does the child/ young person demonstrate a simplistic or flawed understanding of religion or politics?
- Does the child/ young person have a history of crime, including episodes in prison?
- Is the child/young person a foreign national, refugee or awaiting a decision on their immigration/ national status?
- Does the child/ young person have insecure, conflicted or absent family relationships?
- Has the child/ young person experienced any trauma in their lives, particularly any trauma associated with war or sectarian conflict?
- Is there evidence that a significant adult or other in the child/young person's life has extremist view or sympathies?

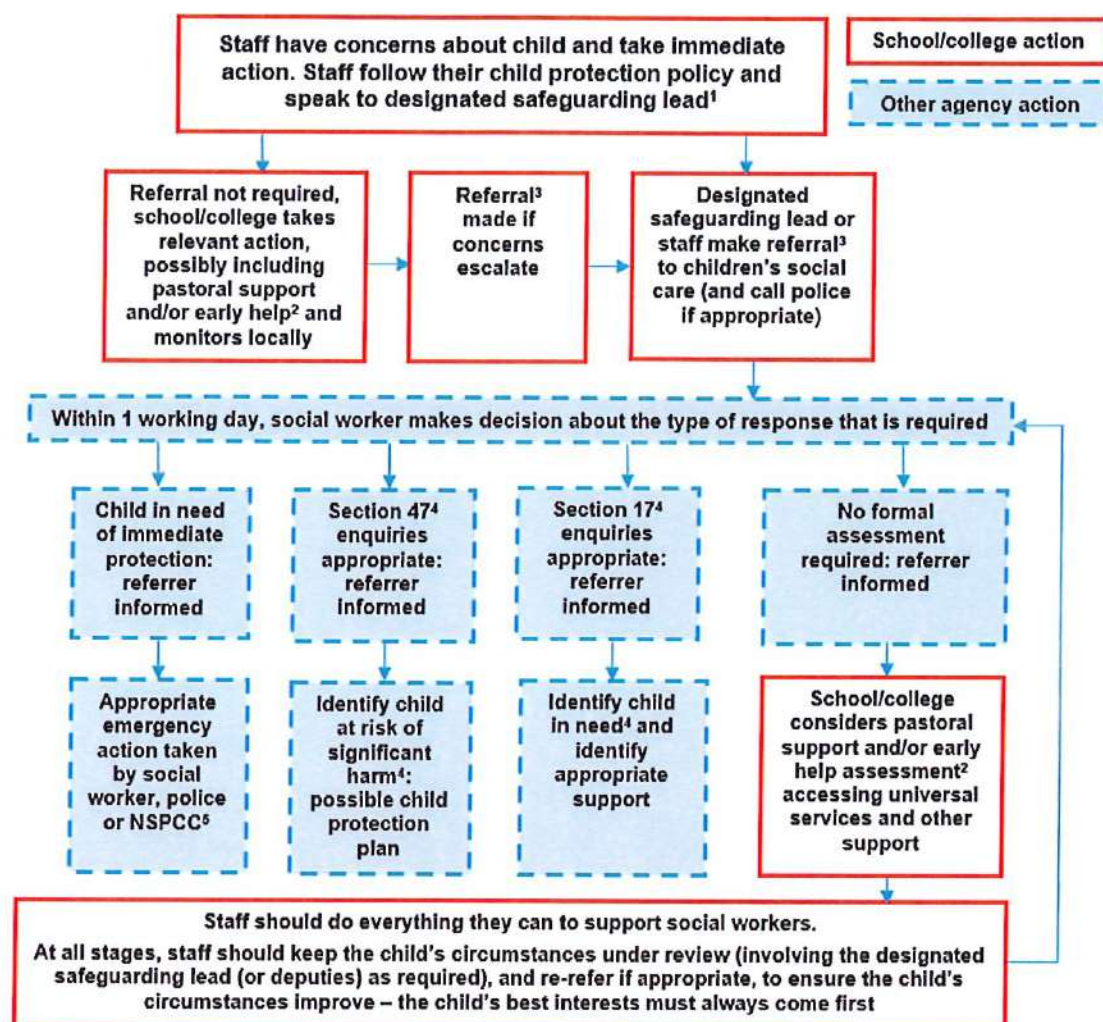
More critical risk factors could include: -

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Articulating support for extremist causes or leaders

- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour

Appendix 4

Figure 1: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns about a child



1 In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

2 Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated Family Help, a family help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the Family Help process.

3 Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

4 Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under [section 17 of the Children Act 1989](#). Under [section 47 of the Children Act 1989](#), where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

5 This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Appendix 5

Appendix 5: Information sharing

Further details on information sharing can be found in the following

- Guidance to support schools with data protection activity, including compliance with UK data protection laws.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-toolkit-for-schools>
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/education/>
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Appendix 6

Bridgewater School - Children Absent From Education

We recognise that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a warning sign for a range of safeguarding issues. The definition of a child absent from education is: "All children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school."

In addition, Bridgewater School defines children absent from education or at risk of missing education as including: 'any child who is not accessing full-time appropriate provision'. This includes: pupils who have moved into the area and are not yet on a school roll as well as other pupils who are not on a school roll for any other reason than permanent exclusion such as: Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan awaiting an appropriate placement; long-term non-attenders and children who fall out of the education system, e.g. by failing to start appropriate provision, by ceasing to attend due to exclusion or withdrawal by parent, by removal from roll with no named destination, by failure to complete a transition between providers, by failure to find a suitable school place either after moving to a new LA or moving within Salford.

The Admissions Officer, currently Mrs Lawrence, will receive referrals and identify those children who are absent and will maintain the pupil database for the purpose of recording and tracking pupils who are out of school.

When a child leaves any part of Bridgewater School, we shall do our utmost to find out where they have gone. Where a pupil leaves a school and no notification of a new school has been received, we must notify the Local Authority CME officer within 1-10 days of their last date of attendance.

Pupils join the school roll (i.e. are listed in both the admissions and attendance registers) on the expected first day of attendance. Therefore, the usual procedures for reporting absences apply even where the pupil does not arrive on the first day. Note that any child missing from education is also deemed to be a 'Child in Need'.

In line with Salford City Council procedures, which can be found at:

<https://www.salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/info-for-parents-students-and-teachers/school-attendance-behaviour-and-welfare/children-missing-education/>