



# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

September 2021

Senior member of staff responsible:	Mr P Lowe-Werrell, Headteacher
Designated member of staff:	Miss S Pugh, Assistant Headteacher
Governor responsible:	Mr G Lawrence
Revised:	September 2021
Approved by Governing Body:	September 2021
Review date:	September 2022

This policy is reviewed annually unless there are changes in legislation or guidance in the interim period, in which case it is updated to reflect the changes as and when necessary.

Amendment Number	Location of Amendment/Brief Summary	Date of Amendment
1	Reference to New KCSIE (September 2018)	September 2018
2	Reference to New KCSIE (September 2019)	September 2019
3	Changes in line with new LA Guidance	September 2019
4	Staff Designations	January 2020
5	Reference to New KCSIE (September 2021)	September 2021
6	Changes in line with new LA Guidance	September 2021
7		

## Safeguarding Children - Child Protection Policy and Procedure

This policy reflects current legislation, accepted best practice and complies with the government guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children, March 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2021

### Important contact details

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):	Miss S Pugh (Assistant Headteacher)
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):	Mr Mark Jervis (Assistant Headteacher)
Designated Safeguarding Leads:	Mr Peter Lowe-Werrell (Headteacher) Miss E Weston (Assistant Headteacher) Mrs K Mould (Assistant Headteacher) Mrs I Cawthorne (Administration Assistant)
Safeguarding and child protection link governor:	Mr Greg Lawrence
Looked after children (LAC) link governor:	Mr Greg Lawrence

### If concerned about a child or behaviour of an adult phone Shropshire Council Dedicated Safeguarding Line:

First Point of Contact (FPOC) (Compass and Initial Contact Team)	0345 678 9021
Designated Officer in the Local Authority – LADO <a href="mailto:lado@shropshire.gov.uk">lado@shropshire.gov.uk</a>	0345 678 9021
<b>Shropshire Out of hours Emergency Duty Team</b>	0345 678 9040
Public Protection Unit (West Mercia Police)	0300 333 3000
Police Emergency	999
Police Non-emergency	101
Childline:	0800 1111

# 1. Policy Statement

## Introduction

At Mary Webb School and Science College (MWSSC), we believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and that safeguarding the welfare of **all** children and young people is everyone's responsibility.

We recognise that the safety and protection of all students is of paramount importance and that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting students from harm. We believe that MWSSC provides a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes all students' social, physical, emotional and moral development.

It is the school's duty to respond promptly and appropriately to all concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child. We work in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies and follow Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) procedures and acknowledge that the welfare of the child is paramount. Our statutory duties and supporting guidance are set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

*Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021.*

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purpose of this policy as:

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

This policy is also based on the following legislation and guidance:

- Ensure that the students' development is supported in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Raise the awareness of teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
- Confirm the structured procedures to be followed by all members of the MWSSC community in cases of suspected harm or abuse.
- Emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff and those with designated responsibility for child protection, health and safety and other safeguarding responsibilities.
- Emphasise the appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies, procedures and arrangements for other service providers who use the school's premises.

**This policy will have consideration for, and be in compliance with, the following legislation, statutory guidance and key information**

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, 2021 Department for Education (DfE)
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' – 2018
- The "Prevent" Duty - July 2015
- Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 - preventing people being drawn into terrorism and promotion of British values to ensure children are kept safe from radicalisation.
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 – Serious Crime Act 2015 – mandatory reporting of FGM from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021
- The Ofsted Compulsory Childcare Register
- [Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership Threshold Guidance](#)
- [West Midlands Procedures](#)
- Ofsted Common 'Inspection framework: safeguarding in maintained schools and academies' - September 2015
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) Procedure Guidance
- Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) Threshold Guidance Document
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004

During Covid-19, the school has put in place a Safeguarding and Child Protection Annex to ensure that additional safeguarding measures have been put in place. Staff are to refer to this Annex for specific procedures during Covid-19 as well as follow this policy.

This policy and procedure will also link to other school policies & procedures;

- Behaviour Management
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying
- Safer Recruitment
- Special Educational Needs
- Attendance
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy
- Trips and Visits
- Health and Safety
- Relationship, sex and health education
- E-safety/ICT
- Looked After Children
- Private Fostering
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation
- Whistleblowing

## **2. Procedures**

### **2.1 Adult Roles & Responsibilities**

All staff (including students and volunteers) at MWSSC are familiar with the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2018 as set out in the West Midlands Procedures.\_SSCP Contacts and Definitions Handout, see *STK 1*.

All staff are aware of their individual roles in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including their responsibility to be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We ensure that all staff (including student teachers and volunteers) undergo a process where they are given copies of the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect. On-going support is provided through regular link governor meetings and safeguarding reviews to ensure these policies and procedures are put into practice to protect children.

All staff update their child protection training at least every three years. All new staff will have a child protection briefing from the DSL prior to commencing their post and will undertake level 1 child protection training within their first term at the school. In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (via staff briefings) as required, but at

least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 Part 1 must be read by all members of staff. Governing bodies and proprietors, working with the senior leadership team and especially the DSL, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A. Designated Safeguarding Leads, the Senior Leadership Team and governing bodies should read KCSIE 2021 in its entirety.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will take the lead for safeguarding and child protection issues is:

- Miss Sarah Pugh (Assistant Headteacher)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is:

- Mr Mark Jervis (Assistant Headteacher)

Additional Safeguarding Leads are:

- Mr Peter Lowe-Werrell (Headteacher)
- Miss Emma Weston (Assistant Headteacher)

The safeguarding link governor (Local Governing Body) who oversees this work is:

- Mr G Lawrence. (Contact details for the safeguarding link governor can be obtained from the school office)

The photographs of all DSLs and the safeguarding link governor are prominently displayed around the school for ease of identification of these key contacts.

All of our Safeguarding Leads will update their child protection/safeguarding training every two years with the DSL and DDSL having specific responsibilities as listed in *STK 2 and 3*.

## **2.2 Staff Supervision (including students and volunteers)**

In order to ensure that all staff are alert to any issues for concern, staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding and child protection through a range of training and supervision activities. This includes both formal and informal supervision, annual appraisals, staff meetings and access to SSCP approved training. Individual supervision offers staff an opportunity to receive coaching to improve their practice with children and address any issues resulting in poor performance. Individual supervision also provides a safe space in which to raise any concerns they may have about the conduct of other adults connected with the setting.

Staff supervision is also used to ensure that all staff remain suitable to work with children. This means staff are required to inform the headteacher of any medication they are taking and provide medical evidence that this will not impair their ability to look after children properly. All staff are reminded of this requirement annually. Staff are also required to disclose any information, which may lead to their disqualification as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020*.

## **2.3 Record Keeping**

When a concern about a child's welfare or safety is raised it will be discussed with the DSL and recorded on a "Safeguarding Incidents & Concerns Form", see *STK 4*. The DSL will make a decision about whether the concern should be shared with another agency (see **decision**

**making** below) or kept on record in case future concerns arise. The reason for the decision will be noted alongside the record.

Records should include:

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

All records will be stored in separate confidential files in a locked, secure place with restricted access.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the DSL should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. When a pupil transfers to another school within this or another authority, the confidential information held is forwarded under confidential cover and separate from the pupil's main file to the DSL for child protection in the receiving school. This procedure is undertaken for all students transferring to the MWSSC or transferring from MWSSC. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained, see *STK 5*.

Information is shared as necessary to protect children from harm. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. We follow the guidance in the HMG 2018 guide *'Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers'* and the HMG 2015 guide *'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'*.

Staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care. Governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

When information is being accumulated prior to possible referral we will start a chronology of events, see *STK 6*.

Child Protection - Student Chronology

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Form: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



Brief summary of event/issue/incident reported (Attach further details if required)

Subsequent Action

Date	Significant Event (Any event that has an impact on student or family)	Source of Information (e.g. contact, home visit, other agency)	Action taken and why	Staff

Date	<b>Significant Event</b> (Any event that has an impact on student or family)	<b>Source of Information</b> (e.g. contact, home visit, other agency)	<b>Action taken and why</b>	<b>Staff</b>

Some chronologies will need to be produced for a specific reason for example, when a new relationship is started, during multi-agency meetings, from the start of a significant event, or from the start of the date parameters set by a statutory case review. The chronology should then continue throughout the intervention, or for as long as is required.

The DSL will regularly review (termly) all child protection chronologies to decide if the accumulation of events is having a detrimental impact on a child and must be referred to FPOC. If the DSL decides not to refer, the reason will be noted on the child's chronology.

## **2.4 Decision making – ‘Accessing *the right service at the right time*’**

We take a holistic approach to safeguarding all children in our care and recognise that different families may need a different level of support at different times. To enable us to recognise at which level a family might require support; we use the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership's *Multi-Agency Guidance on Threshold Criteria to help support Children, Young People and their Families in Shropshire*. [Shropshire Threshold Document](#), see STK 7.

This guidance identifies four levels to ensure all children receive the support and intervention they need to achieve a positive life experience. Of central importance in understanding where a child's needs might lie on this continuum, is the co-operation and engagement of parents and carers and we aim to develop good, professional relationships to ensure that we have a shared understanding of each child's needs.

It should be noted that if parents demonstrate a lack of co-operation or appreciation about the concerns we identify this may, in itself, raise the level of the need and required level of action.

### **Level 1 – Universal**

Children with no additional needs and where there are no concerns. Typically, these children are likely to live in a resilient and protective environment where their needs are met. These children will require no additional support beyond that which is universally available.

We anticipate that by working closely with parents and sign-posting families to other universal services within our community that we can meet the needs of children and families at this level.

Consent must be sought to access services and share information with others. Any information sharing between agencies without consent must be clear as to its legal basis.

Ensure privacy information is shared with the family and a consent form completed. Support is provided by services identified as universal in local communities and are available to all. These include: schools, colleges, early years and childcare provision, primary healthcare provision (i.e. GP, hospitals), and the voluntary and community sector.

Universal support will most likely be provided by a single agency and/or existing support from family, friends, the community.

It is these Universal Services who are best placed to ensure children and families have access to the Early Help Offer. The needs of the child/young person are appropriately met within this framework.

Universal Services are constant and remain involved if/when the child/family move up to other levels of need.

***At this level parents will always be consulted before any action is taken.***

### **Level 2 – Children in need of Early Help**

These children can be defined as needing some additional support without which they would be at risk of not meeting their full potential.

Their identified needs may relate to their health, educational, or social development, and are likely to be short term needs. If ignored these issues may develop into more worrying concerns for the child.

In addition to the Whole Family Assessment, specific local tools and pathways should be used where there are concerns about possible harm to the child.

Early Help aims to provide a multi-agency response when a single agency is not able to progress and help the child and their family.

The existing single agency or multi-agency team should work with the family and each other to complete a Whole Family Assessment and Action Plan.

At this stage a lead professional/practitioner should be identified who can build a relationship with the whole family and ensure that the whole family's needs are met and any actions progressed.

Consent must be sought to access services. Any information sharing between agencies without consent must be clear as to its legal basis.

Ensure privacy information is shared with the family and a consent form completed.

These children will be living in greater adversity than most other children or have a greater degree of vulnerability than most. If their needs are not clear, not known or not being met, a lead professional will coordinate a whole family assessment and plan around the child.

Sometimes in discussion with parents and carers and through our observations and records we may think a child and their family could benefit from additional support from outside agencies to ensure he/she reaches his/her full potential. This process is known as Early Help. We have knowledge of the different agencies which may be able to offer support and we will work with parents and carers to decide which support would be most appropriate for their family. We will work with parents to complete any Early Help referral forms required to access this support.

If we are unsure of where to access support, we will contact Compass for advice.

Further information about Early Help can be found at: <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/>  
***At this level parents will always be consulted before we contact another agency and their written consent gained before any action is taken.***

### **Level 3 – Targeted Early Help**

This level applies to those children identified as requiring targeted support and who meet at least 2 of the 6 Strengthening Families criteria in the Whole Family Assessment. It is likely that for these children their needs and care are compromised.

These children will be those who are vulnerable to harm or experiencing adversity. In addition to the Whole Family Assessment, specific local tools and pathways should be used where there are concerns about possible harm to the child.

These children are potentially at risk of developing acute/ complex needs if they do not receive targeted early help.

If a child continues to have unmet needs which cannot be met by Universal or Early Help support, then the existing single agency or multi-agency team should work with the family and each other to review the Whole Family Assessment and Action Plan and follow the Request for Intervention Pathway to request more intensive family support from a Targeted Early Help Family Support Worker.

Consent must be sought from the family to access services. Any information sharing between agencies without consent must be clear as to its legal basis.

Ensure privacy information is shared with the family and a consent form completed

#### **Level 4 – Complex Significant Needs**

These are children whose needs and care at the present time are likely to be significantly compromised, and/or they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and so who require intervention from Shropshire Council Children's Social Care.

An immediate referral to Compass should be made for assessment under Section 17 or Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Specific local tools and pathways and the Shropshire Threshold Matrix should be used to support their referral and help practitioners to assess significant harm to the child.

#### **Child in Need**

Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) states that a child shall be considered in need if:

- They are unlikely to achieve, maintain or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority.
- Their health and development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provisions of such services and/or;
- They are disabled.

#### **Child Protection**

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 states that the authority shall make necessary enquiries to enable them to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Where it is suspected that a child may be suffering or be at risk of suffering significant harm; referring practitioners must inform parents or carers that they are making a referral to Compass, and seek consent unless to do so may:

- Place the child at increased risk of significant harm; or
- Place any other person at risk of injury; or
- Obstruct or interfere with any potential Police investigation; or
- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm.

Guidance for assessment practice can be found on page 13 of the Shropshire Threshold document.

### **Significant Harm**

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single violent episode may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

It may be:

- the child is at risk of serious harm from others or themselves and requires skilled risk assessment and protection;
- the child or young person is likely to put others at risk or harm, distress or loss and a response needs to take account of the individual's interests and wellbeing of others;
- the child's circumstances, including their health, finances, living conditions or social situation, are likely to cause them or others serious harm, social exclusion or reduction of life chances;
- the situation requires assessment of, and intervention in unpredictable emotional, psychological, intra-family or social factors and responses;
- the circumstances are such that there are significant risks in both intervening and not intervening, when a fine judgement is required

Careful analysis and interpretation of information will enable practitioners and families to:

- think about what is important and identify needs or difficulties;
- explain why these have come about;
- understand the impact of strengths and pressures on the child or young person;
- reach agreement about what needs to be improved;
- agree the priority issues, aims and goals in terms of improving the child's wellbeing;
- agree a series of desired outcomes.

Consider:

- What is the experience of the child?
- When and how are the child's needs not being met?

- What are the effects on the child's current development and long-term effects?
- What are the child's needs, wishes and feelings regarding intervention and likely outcomes?

(Taken from: Multi-agency Guidance on Threshold Criteria to help support Children, Young People and their Families in Shropshire 2017) [Shropshire Threshold Document](#)

### **Escalating / de-escalating concerns**

Just because a child is assessed at a point in time as meeting a "certain threshold criteria" it does not mean that they always will. An assessment is an on-going process, not an event; children's needs often change over time. The DSL will maintain an overview of all children with a plan to ensure children's needs are being met at the right level of intervention. Of central importance in understanding where a child's needs might lie on this continuum, is the cooperation and engagement of the parents and carers – a lack of co-operation or appreciation about the concern may of itself raise the level of the need and required response.

### **The impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking action**

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSL or DDSL immediately
- if the DSL is not able to be contacted ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

### **If you suspect a child is at risk of harm**

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed; their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

Use the Safeguarding Incidents & Concerns Form, STK 4, to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section 'If a child discloses to you'.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned; you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, followed by procedures set out in this policy and by speaking to the DSL/DDSL.

### **If a child tells you that they have been abused**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to tell someone that they are being neglected and or abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

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

### **During your conversation with the child:**

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child's mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person, together with your original notes.



- Seek support if you feel distressed.

Refer to and use STK 4 to record a concern.

### **3. Specific Legal Duties to Report**

Legislation has recognised and criminalised the following types of abuse and placed duties on education settings to report offences to the authorities:

#### **Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty**

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2015 Prevent Strategy – this promotes the values of:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

The Prevent duty is the duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 on specified authorities (including schools), to have due regard for the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The statutory guidance makes clear the need for schools to ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools.

The general risks affecting children and young people may vary from area to area, and according to their age. Schools are required to identify risks within their local context and identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation, and know what to do to support them.

The Prevent duty requires school monitoring and filtering systems to be fit for purpose. The school has a filtering system in place and its effectiveness is continuously monitored by Mr A Morris (Network Manager).

The Prevent duty means that all staff have a duty to be vigilant, and where necessary, to report concerns about internet use that includes, for example, the following:

- Internet searches for terms related to extremism
- Visits to extremist websites
- Use of social media to read or post extremist material
- Grooming of individuals

If a member of staff has a concern about a particular student's they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's DSL as set out in this document.

The DSL should contact West Mercia Prevent Team:

Sgt Calum Forsyth – 07970 047227

DC Holly Aungiers – 01386 591815

[Prevent@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Prevent@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

The school have a separate policy (LA are currently updating this policy with Channel and Jane Parsons), so our policy remains in draft form.

The Prevent Team email is: [prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk)

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or DDSL) about any concerns regarding 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. Therefore, if we become aware of any cases where girls are at risk of FGM or have actually been harmed, we will contact the Police immediately and follow up with a referral to Compass to ensure that we are meeting our reporting duties.

***We may not seek parental consent if it is thought that this would put the girl at increased risk.***

### **Domestic abuse and honour based violence**

Children living in households where there is domestic abuse which could be coercion or violence, including honour based violence could be at significant risk of harm. We will seek support for victims and their children through Compass.

***Depending on the level of risk, we may or may not consult parents before contacting Compass.***

## **4. Specific Safeguarding Issues**

To ensure that our children and young people are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect (see STK 1). Staff are made aware of specific safeguarding issues (listed below) through child protection training, reading up to date guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021 – Part 1 and The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements and accessing SSCP procedures at:

<http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk>

All staff are made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator of abuse. The DSL and school mental health lead (Sarah Pugh) will liaise with Safeguarding Lead Team, to ensure information is being shared. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy, and speaking to the DSL or a DDSL. [The Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) guidance sets out how schools and colleges can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school/college approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of their students.

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with the school, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that

decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

The school ensures that the DSLs are continually updated in all areas below. They are familiar with the referral pathways and specific toolkits and guidance available on the [SSCP website](#).

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos ([UCKIS](#)) can be signs that children are at risk.

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues (TES, MindEd, NSPCC). Staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites whenever necessary.

- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines
- Children missing from education, home and care
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Health and Wellbeing e.g. fabricated or induced illness, medical conditions, mental health and behaviour
- Faith based abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Missing children and adult's strategy
- On-line safety
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Peer on peer abuse e.g. sexting, sexual violence & sexual harassment
- Trafficking

Where incidents and/or behaviours are associated with factors outside the school setting and/or occur between children outside the school setting the DSL (or DDSL) should be considering contextual safeguarding. This simply means assessments of children in such cases should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors and so, it is important that the school provides as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the evidence and the full context

of any abuse. Supporting information regarding contextual safeguarding, and where the school fits into the wider environment is available at <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk>

Both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. The DSL can obtain local information regarding Exploitation from SSCP and by attending local briefings, for example safeguarding network meetings.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Staff at MWSSC recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Victims of peer abuse are supported as they would be if they were the victim of any other form of abuse, in accordance with this policy. MWSSC will not tolerate any form of abuse; victims of it will be supported and perpetrators will be sanctioned according to the school’s behaviour policy.

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same age or similar age.

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

- bullying (including cyber bullying);
- abuse in personal intimate relationships between peers;
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes or online;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sexual or sexist name calling;
- inappropriate or unwanted sexualised touching;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- ‘upskirting’ (typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or causing the victim humiliation, distress or alarm);
- ‘sexting’ (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
- revenge porn;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Children can experience peer-on-peer sexual abuse in a wide range of settings, including:

- at school
- at home or in someone else’s home

- in public spaces
- online

It can take place in spaces which are supervised or unsupervised. Within a school context, for example, peer-on-peer sexual abuse might take place in spaces such as toilets, the playground, corridors and when children are walking home. 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

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society. In particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved in serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, 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.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Line Guidance.

Compliance with the Public-Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal requirement for school that are public bodies. Under the PSED, schools that are public bodies have a general duty to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between different groups and to foster good relations between different groups. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications such as, for example, the elimination of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

MWSSC will ensure that the following areas are covered within the curriculum and try to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse:

- Healthy and respectful relationships;
- What respectful behaviour looks like;
- Consent;
- Gender role, stereotyping, equality;
- Body confidence and self-esteem;
- Prejudiced behaviour;
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong; and
- Addressing cultures of sexual harassment.

The school delivers this currently through planned Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE). Please refer to the school RSE policy for more information.

If staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse, they should speak to their DSL (or deputy). The school would respond to an incident of Peer on Peer abuse by recording the incident using the Incidents and Concerns Form (STK 4) and by following the guidance as set out in "Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges" published by Department for Education May 2018.

In summary the process and procedures for managing a sexual violence or sexual harassment incident are;

***Whole school approach:***

*Pre-planned risk assessment proforma in place  
Training for staff on how to report incidents  
Training on how to manage reports  
Peer on peer policy in place*

***Responding to a report:***

*Victims are reassured, supported and kept safe  
Record the concern  
Inform the DSL if not involved in the initial report.*

***Risk Assessment:***

*Risk assessment for victim  
Risk assessment for alleged perpetrator  
Risk assessment for all other children involved  
Initial consideration of children sharing a classroom and/or having direct contact in school  
Initial consideration of contact between children travelling to and from school*

***Support***

*Support for victim and alleged perpetrator*

***Managing the report:***

*Consider the options to manage the report, including manage internally, early help, referral to children's social care and report to police  
Consider bail conditions  
Manage delays in the criminal process*

The school monitors whether there are any patterns of peer on peer abuse by recording on Record of Concern & Chronology and will determine necessary support and intervention.

It is important that staff at MWSSC understand that the child who is perpetrating the abuse may also be a victim or at risk of harm. Staff should make every effort to ensure that the perpetrator is also treated as a victim and undertake assessments to conclude this. Sensitive work must be undertaken with the child who is perpetrating, by helping them to understand the nature of their behaviour and the effect it has on others may prevent abuse.

Staff must be able to use their professional judgement in identifying when what may be perceived as “normal developmental childhood behaviour” becomes abusive, dangerous and harmful to others. DSLs may need to consult with the SSCP Threshold document to help with their decision making as well as “Brook Traffic Light Toolkit”.

The DSL has attended Brook Traffic Light Training Autumn 2021 which will support in identifying developmentally typical behaviours or those that may be referred to as problematic or harmful.

Children do not always feel able to speak out about their experiences of peer-on-peer sexual abuse. They may be afraid of:

- being considered a ‘snitch’
- getting in trouble themselves
- how they will be perceived by others
- teachers or other adults not being discrete
- their parents being informed

A helpline was launched by the NSPCC on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to support potential victims of sexual harassment and abuse. Run by the NSPCC it aims to provide advice and support to both children and adults who are victims of abuse in school. It will also include how to contact the police to report crimes. The advice line is also available to support professionals and parents. **NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663.**

This dedicated helpline will offer support to:

- all children and young people making current and non-recent disclosures of abuse
- any children or young people who want to talk about being involved or witnessing any incidents
- any adults who have experienced non-recent abuse
- parents and carers who have any concerns about their own or other children
- professionals who work in schools and need support in this or related issues.

This school promotes the use of this helpline by;

- Posters around the school
- Promoted in school assemblies & staff meetings
- Newsletters to parents
- On the school website

## 5. Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities

MWSSC recognises that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) may present additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration; children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without necessarily showing outward signs; communication barriers.

It is important, therefore, that we are particularly sensitive to these issues when considering any aspect of the welfare and safety of such children, and that we seek professional advice where necessary.

The cohort of students accessing Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware of the additional risk of harm that their students may be vulnerable to. The DfE has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard: [Alternative Provision](#) and [DfE Statutory Guidance Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

MWSSC ensures that any alternative provision used for students is quality assured. A quality assurance checklist (Appendix G) is used to evidence that safeguarding procedures are being followed and the necessary vetting checks for staff at the Alternative Provision have been undertaken.

### Children Missing Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools, colleges and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and such children are at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. MWSSC staff follow procedures for unauthorised absence and we have appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses in place for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. These procedures will help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and will help prevent the risk of a child going missing in future. Where reasonably possible the school will hold at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of an emergency and in case there are welfare concerns at home.

The school has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the Children Missing Education guidance or Shropshire Council Learning Gateway.



## **Elective Home Education**

Many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

Please see link to [Elective Home Education \(Shropshire Council\)](#)

## **Safeguarding Children who are Looked After**

Staff are aware the most common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse and/or neglect. Appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and the contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibilities. Appropriate staff members also have information about the child's care arrangements and the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The DSL has details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

The designated teacher for looked after children (LAC) will work with the relevant Local Authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered students who are looked after or who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, child arrangement orders or who are adopted from state care outside of England and Wales. The appointment of a designated teacher is a statutory requirement of the governing body.

The school's DSL has the relevant contact details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual head. The DSL works closely with the designated teacher.

## **Injuries**

At the beginning of each session or school day parents are requested to notify the school of any accidents, incidents or injuries which may affect their child before sending him/her to school. A note will be made of any existing injuries and how the injury was received will be recorded. A body map may be used to indicate any marks or bruises, see STK 8.

Any serious injury occurring in the school e.g. broken bone, is reported to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) via RIDDOR. This is also reported to Ofsted within 14 days, see STK 9.

## **Safe use of ICT and mobile phones**

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potential harmful and inappropriate online material. At MWSSC we ensure that there are appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. We have an effective whole school/college approach to online safety empowers us as a school, to protect and educate students, students, our staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your students, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group(<https://apwg.org/>).

Staff at MWSSC undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety and they ensure, under the direction of the DSL, students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. Safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of MWSSC's safeguarding approach, wider staff training and curriculum planning. NSPCC 4 hour CPD Keeping Children Safe on Line, has been completed by all staff.

Where children are being asked to learn online at home, the school will follow advice from the DfE, with regards to safeguarding and remote learning.

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices such as computers, tablets, and game devices are commonplace. However, MWSSC recognises that although these devices have brought great benefit we also need to ensure that we help children to understand that there are dangers and how to keep themselves safe. This includes:

- Keeping personal details secure
- Understanding that not all content is appropriate, truthful or legal
- What to do if they do accidentally access inappropriate or illegal content
- What to do if they are upset by something they receive
- What to do if they intend to physically meet someone they have met on-line

Staff are able to use their personal mobile phones during their break times in designated areas. During working hours, they must be kept out of the reach of children and parents. All staff are made aware of their duty to follow this procedure, and to challenge anyone not adhering to it. Through induction, staff and volunteers are made aware of our "acceptable use policy" and "mobile technology protocols" for both home and when in the workplace. If any staff or volunteers breach this policy, then we will take disciplinary action which may result in a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Visitors to the school (including parents) are required to turn off their mobile devices when entering the school building.

We believe that photographs validate children's experiences and achievements and are a valuable way of recording milestones in a child's life. Parental permission for the different ways in which we use photographs is gained as part of the initial registration at MWSSC. We take a mixture of photos that reflect the school environment; sometimes this will be when children are engrossed in an activity either on their own or with their peers.

MWSSC students are allowed to use their own mobile phones or devices at social times. However, they are not able to access the school's internet server. Students must not take images of other children whilst at school.

## **6. Partnership with families**

A copy of this policy is made available to all parents prior to their child joining our school as well as details of the complaints procedure. In general, any concerns will be discussed with parents and we will offer support. All conversations, whatever the outcome, should be recorded appropriately in order to show that they took place, identify what was agreed and evaluate how effectively they enabled needs to be met. In this way quality conversations can demonstrate their impact on successful practice, including improvements in decision making and joint working. Conversations should continue in order to inform the on-going planning and reviewing.

Practitioners working with families at a Universal, Early Help or Targeted level will need to get the consent of the family before any information is held or shared with other agencies. If the practitioner does not gain the family's consent and in future has ongoing concerns, they should consider contacting Compass for advice and guidance.

### **With the exception of child protection matters, referrals to Compass cannot be accepted without parents having been consulted first.**

Consent is not required for child protection referrals where it is suspected that a child may be suffering or be at risk of suffering significant harm; however, the school, would need to inform parents or carers that we are making a referral, unless to do so may:

- Place the child at increased risk of Significant Harm; or
- Place any other person at risk of injury; or
- Obstruct or interfere with any potential Police investigation; or
- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm.

The child's interest must be the overriding consideration in making such decisions. Decisions should be recorded.

If consent is withheld by the parent:

- If it is felt that the child's needs can be met through Early Help, then discussion with the family should take place about the completion of an Early Help Assessment and provision of services through an Early Help Plan. Early help consultations are available from the Early Help Advisors for support in managing these situations.
- For another agency familiar with the child and family to make the approach about information sharing to the family.

- No assessment should take place. The rationale for this decision will be recorded on the concerns form.
- The combination of the concerns and the refusal to consent to enquiries being made may result in the concerns being defined as child protection concerns. In this case, information sharing may proceed without parental consent. The consultation and the decision to proceed without consent must be recorded on the case papers.

**If a child has actually been injured or is in imminent danger of being injured then we will contact the emergency services, medical or police, immediately on 999.**

When making a Level 4 referral to Compass we will ensure we have a record of all details required detailed on a [Shropshire Multi-Agency Referral Form](#) (MARF)

## **7. Prevention in the Curriculum**

MWSSC recognises the importance of developing students' awareness of behaviour that is unacceptable towards them and others, and how they can help keep themselves and others safe. Personal safety, including e-safety, is an integral part of the work undertaken by all students and is delivered through computer science lessons, PSHCE lessons and through the work undertaken by external agencies e.g. the Police, school nurse etc. refer to RSE and PSHCE policies.

The PSHCE programme, including Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, in each key stage provides personal development opportunities for students to learn about keeping safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, students are taught to, for example:

- Safely explore their own and others' attitudes.
- Recognise and manage risks in different situations and how to behave responsibly.
- Judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being and develop effective ways of resisting pressure; including knowing when and where to get help.
- Use assertiveness techniques to resist unhelpful pressure.
- The importance of Internet safety

## **8. Managing allegations of abuse made against staff (this includes apprentices & supply staff), students or volunteers (see STK 10) Shropshire HR KCSiE Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy & KCSiE Low Level Safeguarding Concerns policy)**

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, this school will ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

There are two levels of concern;

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold.
2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – which may be referred to as 'low level concerns'.

Further information about the two levels of concern can be found in our separate policy titled, 'Whistle Blowing Policy'.

Allegations which might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm to children if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position will be taken seriously. We have a duty to inform Ofsted of any serious allegations made against a person which suggests he or she has:

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

We also have a duty of care towards our staff. We provide support for anyone facing an allegation and provide employees with a named contact if they are suspended. It is essential that any allegations of abuse made against members of staff or volunteers are dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

If there are concerns about a staff member then this should be referred to the headteacher. Where there are concerns about the headteacher, this should be referred to the Chair of the local governing body and the Executive Principal (EP) of CSAT. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the school's DSL, but ultimately should inform the Chair of governors and EP of CSAT.

The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) may ask for additional information, such as previous history, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations previously and the individual's current contact with children. There may be situations when the LADO will want to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern; in which case this decision and a justification for it will be recorded by both the headteacher and the LADO, and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individuals concerned and by whom. The headteacher will then consider with the LADO what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

Where the school or college identify a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, they should contact children's social care and as appropriate the police immediately. There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

- Looking after the welfare of the child - the DSL is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.

- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

If further action is required, we will follow the advice of the LADO and co-operate with any investigations. We will follow instructions about what can be disclosed to the accused and whether he/she should be suspended whilst further investigations take place. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process. Clear advice will be given to workers on the process of investigation by other agencies. We will follow advice about how to inform families about the allegation.

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where they think that an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006).

### **Whistleblowing**

'Whistle blowing' is a mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source will be recorded and reported to the designated practitioner or appropriate agency. Staff should refer to the school's 'Whistle Blowing Policy'. Concerns about staff directly to the headteacher. If concerns are about the headteacher directly to Chair of Governors/CEO.

### **Recruiting Staff**

We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children. Job adverts and application packs make reference to our safeguarding policy and procedures.

Applicants for posts are clearly informed that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. We ensure that we meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Where applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, we will inform the applicant about their right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

We comply with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 in respect of references and Enhanced DBS checks for staff and volunteers to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable person works with or has access to the children.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 states that schools will be required to complete a risk assessment for each volunteer to decide whether they need to do an Enhanced DBS check or not.

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors, including prospective candidates, to the setting and ensure that we have control over who comes in to the premises so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Where students are placed in an alternative provision, the schools should obtain a written statement from the provider that they have completed all of the vetting and barring checks that are necessary on their staff.

If a member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, the staff member should seek medical advice. The setting will ensure that staff members only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly.

## **9 Resolution of Professional Disagreements**

When practitioners are working together in the complex business of safeguarding children there will inevitably be occasions when there are professional differences of opinion or concerns about practice decisions, actions or lack of actions to a referral, assessment or the progress of a child's plan. In these circumstances, practitioners have a duty to take act to address professional disagreements as soon as they arise in a way that is appropriate and proportionate.

Examples of case-specific professional disagreements include:

- When there is disagreement about the response to a referral made by one agency to another agency or service (e.g. decision making).
- When there is disagreement about the outcome of an assessment.
- When there is serious concern about the implementation of a child's plan and disagreement about how this should be addressed (e.g. agreed actions not being followed through).
- When there is serious concern about the effectiveness of a child's plan in bringing about the necessary changes and disagreement about how this should be addressed (e.g. drift/delay).
- When there is disagreement over the sharing of information in a particular case.

DSLs and managers will consult with the procedures for resolving professional disagreements by accessing it on the West Midlands Child Protection Procedures website. DSLs will record any actions taken and outcomes on file.

### **Use of school/setting premises for non-school/college activities**

The governing bodies or proprietors hire or rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the governing body or proprietor, under the direct supervision or management of their school or college staff, their arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body this is not necessarily the case. The governing body or proprietor should therefore seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate. The governing body or proprietor should also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in

any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. This is overseen by Ellie Evans (School Business Manager) and Pam Roe (Finance Assistant).

### **Safeguarding Tool Kit (available as separate documents)**

1. SSP Contacts and Definitions (9 Pages)
2. Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities (3 Pages)
3. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities (3 Pages)
4. Safeguarding Incidents and Concerns Form (1 Page)
5. Child Protection Documents Transfer Receipt (1 Page)
6. Child Protection Chronology (2 Pages)
7. Shropshire Threshold Document (31 Pages)
8. Body Maps (2 Pages)
9. Serious Incidents – Notifying Ofsted (1 Page)
10. LADO – Managing Allegations (2 pages)

### **Glossary**

CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DBS	Disclosure and Baring Service
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HSE	Health & Safety Executive
KCSiE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LCSPR	Local Child Safeguarding Review
MARF	Multi Agency Referral Form
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PSHCE	Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences
RSE	Relationships & Sex Education
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SSCB	Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board
STK	Safeguarding Tool Kit
TES	Times Educational Supplement
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls



# Mary Webb School & Science College

## The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school's Senior Leadership Team, is appointed to the role of DSL. The DSL should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the DSL carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively.

Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and to contributing to the assessment of children.

### Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more DDSLs. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the DSL and the role should be explicit in their job description.

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the DSL, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

### Availability

During term time the DSL (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Whilst generally speaking the DSL (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the DSL, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and/or Teams or other such media is acceptable.

It is a matter for individual schools and the DSL to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

### Manage referrals

The DSL is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;

- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the DBS as required;
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) – ‘When to call the police’ helps schools to understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

## **Working with others**

The DSL is expected to:

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

## **Information sharing and managing the child protection file**

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 Part one and Part two of the guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the DSL should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as DSLs and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required. Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

## **Raising Awareness**

The DSL should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies, procedures and guidance and required audit processes from the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP)

- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

### **Training, knowledge and skills**

The DSL (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.

The DSL should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide DSLs with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- understand the importance of the role the DSL has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and can provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- can understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and,

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

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

### **Providing support to staff**

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

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

### **Understanding the views of children**

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

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

### **Holding and sharing information**

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 guidance, and therefore the DSL should be equipped to:

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