St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School

Safeguarding (and Child Protection) Policy

Approved by	FGB	**Date** November 2026
Last reviewed	November 2025	
Next review due	November 2027	

1. Definitions

- **Safeguarding** is defined as:
  - Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
  - Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
  - Preventing 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.
- **Child Protection** is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

2. Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children, their families and carers, has a role to play.

- To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should always consider what is in the best interests of the child.
- We take an 'it can happen here' approach where safeguarding is concerned.
- All staff will recognise that racism, faith-based prejudice and other prejudice-based harm can be safeguarding concerns.
- Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- Victims should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor should anyone who has experienced harm ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

This **School** is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.
- Acting on concerns about a child's welfare immediately.
- Fulfilling our legal responsibilities to identify children who may need early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

All action taken by this School will be in accordance with:

- **Current legislation** (these are summarised within Working Together to Safeguard Children: statutory framework)
- **Statutory, national, and local guidance.** This includes:
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children, which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm; in addition, it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- **Local Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Partnership:** around particular safeguarding topics are available on the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Website.
- **Government guidance in relation to:** Specific topical safeguarding issues (see Appendix E Specific Actions to Take on Topical Safeguarding Issues).
- A collection of up-to-date guidance can be found on the Safeguarding in Education Team's guidance page. https://www.bristolsafeguardingineducation.org/guidance/.

3. Equalities Statement

With regards to safeguarding, we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and our general and specific duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty. General duties include:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Details of our specific duties are published under our equality statement and measurable objectives.

We adhere to both the Bristol Equality Charter and Bristol Children's Charter with a view to contribute towards the One City Plan.

Staff are made aware via their initial and refresher safeguarding training of the additional barriers to recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This will be in line with our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (currently known as Special Educational Needs SEN Report).

Children with protected characteristics and those who are questioning their gender may have additional vulnerabilities, including bullying, social isolation, mental health concerns, online harm or family stress. Staff will respond in a child-centred, respectful, and safeguarding-led way, follow the school's equalities duties, involve the DSL where there are concerns, and avoid making assumptions about risk or need based on gender questioning alone.

We also adhere to the principles of and promote anti-oppressive practice in line with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Human Rights Act 1998.

4. Overall Aims

This Policy will contribute to the safeguarding of children at this School by:

- Clarifying safeguarding expectations for members of our community, staff, governing body, students, and their families.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture built on shared values; where students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice and are listened to.
- The school will promote an inclusive and anti-discriminatory culture in which prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviour is recognised, challenged and addressed as a safeguarding concern where appropriate.

- Supporting contextual safeguarding approaches to practice recognising that our site can be a location where harm can occur.
- Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within our community (staff, students, parents/carers) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them.
- Early identification of need for vulnerable students and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety.
- Working in partnership with students, parents/carers, and other agencies in the Local Safeguarding Partnership.

This School is named as a relevant agency in the Local Safeguarding Partnership (Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership). This policy sets out its statutory duty to co-operate, follow and comply with published arrangements as set out by the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership.

5. Professional Expectations, Roles, and Responsibilities

All Staff
All staff will read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education as part of their regular safeguarding training.

In addition to this, all staff will be made aware of the systems in place that support safeguarding including:
- Reading this Policy, the Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, and the Attendance Policy.
- Our safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Know the names of and how to contact the DSL and DSL Deputies, the Chair of Governors, and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.

All staff will therefore be able to identify vulnerable students and take action to keep them safe (see Appendix C Dealing with a disclosure of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and Appendix D Types of Abuse). Information or concerns about students will be shared with the DSL where it includes those: who may need help at an earlier stage, including where there are emerging concerns, indicators of exploitation, modern slavery, abusive, violent or harmful behaviour, or where a child may be at risk of extra-familial harm.
- Who may need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Who require mental health support.
- May benefit from early help.
- Where there is a radicalisation concern.
- Where a crime may have been committed.

All staff will:
- Be involved, where appropriate, in the implementation of individual plans to further safeguard vulnerable students and understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Record concerns appropriately and in a timely manner by using our safeguarding systems.

- Be aware of the need to contact a member of Senior Leadership Team with any concerns they have about safeguarding practices (Appendix A key Guidance for Safeguarding Issues) within our School.
- All staff will understand that children may not feel ready or able to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and that professional curiosity, respectful enquiry, and timely information sharing are important to early identification.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Duties are outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex C). Details of our DSL and Deputy DSLs are available on the School website, on posters across our site (including the notice board in Reception), and the DSL's name is in our Visitor Information Leaflet.

- The DSL is a senior member of staff who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at our School.
- The DSL works with the Headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that students in need are experiencing or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on learner's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.
- Activities include the management of work undertaken by any Deputy DSLs.
- Manages early identification of vulnerability of students and their families from staff through cause for concerns or notifications. This will ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns, referrals and the rationale for any decisions made are maintained.
- Maintains oversight of Early Help and Family Help involvement, ensuring the school contributes relevant information, analysis, and challenge where required, and that records clearly evidence decisions, actions, and impact.
- Manages referrals to local safeguarding partners where students with additional needs have been identified. These can include those:
  - Who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation
  - Who require mental health support.
  - Who may benefit from early help.
  - Where there is a radicalisation concern.
  - Where a crime may have been committed.

The DSL will also:

- Work with others, acting as a point of contact for outside agencies about safeguarding.
- Support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies.
- When required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- Coordinate safeguarding training and raise awareness and understanding to the school community around policies and practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable students with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
  - Know who these children are,
  - Understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
  - Are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face.

    - Provide additional academic support or make reasonable adjustments to help children who have **or have had** a social worker to reach their potential.
- Ensure the successful transfer of a Safeguarding/Child Protection File when a learner moves on to a new setting (within 5 days for in year transfer or the first 5 days of the start of a new term).
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding cover and availability during term time/any out of hours/out of term activities managed by our School.

Governors

Duties are further outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 2). There is a designated Safeguarding Governor who takes responsibility for our safeguarding responsibility, to ensure that safeguarding and child protection practice, process, and policy (including online safety) is effective and is compliant with legislation, statutory guidance, and Local Safeguarding Partnership arrangements (Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership).

The designated Safeguarding Governor will:

- Liaise with the Headteacher and the DSL to produce an annual report for governors and complete the mandatory S. 175 safeguarding audit for the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership.
- Ensure that we remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to our attention without delay.
- Ensure that this document is updated annually (or when there are significant updates).
- Ensure that the DSL is an appropriate senior member of our Senior Leadership Team and ensure that they have adequate time, funding, training, resources, and support to carry out their role effectively.
- Ensure that the training and learning for our community is robust and effective.
- Ensure that students are taught about safeguarding as part of the curriculum including online safety in compliance with statutory guidance Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education.
- Review the Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards for Schools and Colleges and make sure we are compliant with the requirements to meet these duties through discussions with IT staff and service providers.
- Ensure oversight of emerging technology risks, including artificial intelligence, deepfakes, image-based abuse, cyber-enabled coercion, and the effectiveness of filtering, monitoring, information security, and access management arrangements.
- Ensure that teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors have appropriate checks carried out in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 3).
- Ensure that there are procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors who may not be suitable to work with or pose a risk to students. This includes having a process to manage low-level concerns.
- Ensure that systems are in place for students to effectively share a concern about a safeguarding issue they are experiencing, express their views, and give feedback.
- Ensure that our School has systems in place to prevent, identify, and respond to child-on-child harm (including sexual abuse and sexual harassment) and mental health concerns, and review the effectiveness of our School's online safety practices.

- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are in place when the school premises are used for non-school activities, including clear expectations for hirers, safeguarding procedures, suitability checks where relevant, and arrangements for responding to allegations or concerns.
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher (Deputy Headteacher Pastoral, Inclusion, and Ethos) promotes educational achievement for children in care and in other care arrangements.

5. Safeguarding Training

Staff

- All staff undergo safeguarding and child protection induction training (including online safety) as part of their induction, which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
- All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection refresher training (including online safety incorporating staff responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at least annually (via formal training, email, our Staff Bulletin and internal safeguarding update, and staff meetings).
- All staff will complete FGM awareness training and will understand their legal duty under the Mandatory Reporting Duty.
- All staff will complete PREVENT awareness training. This is to ensure that they can comply with the legal expectations under the PREVENT duty.
- Staff training will include clear reference to our staff Whistleblowing Policy, the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and guidance for escalating concerns.
- Training and updates will include emerging safeguarding themes, including serious violence, financial exploitation, modern slavery indicators, misogyny, and technology-facilitated abuse.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies

- Will undergo formal training to provide them with the knowledge and skills (including online safety, which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring required to carry out the role. The training will be updated at least every two years.
- Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL.
- The DSL and any Deputies will liaise with the Local Safeguarding Partnership (Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership) to ensure that their knowledge and skills are updated via e-bulletins, by attending DSL network meetings, and by taking time to read and digest safeguarding bulletins.

Other training considerations

- At least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training, in line with School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team will make themselves aware of and understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. This will ensure that those who have responsibility for the management of behaviour, inclusion, Special Educational Needs, attendance, and exclusions will carry out their duties with a safeguarding consideration.

- The Designated Teacher (Deputy Headteacher Pastoral, Inclusion, and Ethos) for Children in Care will undergo appropriate training to fulfil their role to promote the educational achievement of registered students who are in care.
- The Mental Health Lead will have access to appropriate training.
- Training around safeguarding topics in Annex B (KCSIE) (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) will be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of a whole school safeguarding approach.
- Appropriate colleagues will receive appropriate training in relation to use of reasonable force and positive handling (e.g. Team Teach).

6. Safeguarding in the Curriculum

- We are dedicated to ensuring that students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety (Online Safety Policy). We recognise that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all students, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable students, victims of abuse, and some SEND children might be needed. This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The School works with regard to statutory guidance (Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education), i.e. Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) (known at our School as VIP (Values in Practice)) education, to explore key areas such as self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, building resilience to radicalisation, e-safety, and bullying.
- Teaching on safeguarding will reflect evolving risks, including healthy relationships, misogyny, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation, scams and fraud, and the misuse of AI and digital tools.
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure that 'over- blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what students can be taught about online teaching and safeguarding.
- The curriculum will be shaped to respond to safeguarding incident patterns identified by our Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team (e.g., to respond to an increase in bullying incidents).
- Providing engagement opportunities with parents/carers to consult on key aspects of the curriculum.
- Learners can inform the curriculum via discussions with the school council and student leadership representatives.

7. Safer Recruitment and Safer Working Practice

Safer Recruitment

This School pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Part 3).

- This includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history, and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. References are always obtained, scrutinised, and concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- This includes undertaking online safety checks on shortlisted candidates and undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the

barred list checks, and prohibition checks (and overseas checks if appropriate), dependent on the role and duties performed, including regulated and non-regulated activity.
- All recruitment materials will include reference to this School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of students.
- Before appointment, the school will determine whether the role is regulated activity and will ensure that the level of DBS, barred list and other pre-appointment checks are proportionate to the role, supervision arrangements, and duties to be undertaken. The single central record will be updated accurately and promptly.

Use of reasonable force

'Reasonable force' refers to the physical contact used to restrain and control children using no more force than is needed. The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances. The vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) will be considered.

- The use of reasonable force will be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation and will follow government guidance (Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013; Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention, 2019).
- There is robust recording of any incident where positive handling or restraint has been used. Further review of the incident is carried out to reflect on how the incident could be avoided, this will involve the child and their family.
- Where adults supervise children on work experience, placements, off-site activities or other school-arranged activity, the school will consider whether the activity is regulated activity and will seek assurance about supervision, safeguarding arrangements, and any checks required.

Whistleblowing procedures

Staff are aware of the following whistleblowing channels for situations where they feel unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or a governor, or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed:

- General guidance can be found at Advice on Whistleblowing.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
- The above channels are clearly accessible to all staff in the staff Code of Conduct, and via the staff intranet.

The process around how we manage concerns where a professional may pose a risk to students and our response to low-level concerns can be accessed in the section of this Policy Responding to Allegations of Abuse Made Against Professionals.

8. Key Safeguarding Areas

These topics are themes that can impact on children and families. Specific areas of safeguarding that our School has statutory responsibilities to address are hyperlinked below:

- Children in the court system – Guidance to support children is available
  - Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year-olds)
  - Young witness booklet for 12 to 17 year-olds)

- Children affected by parental offending/imprisonment.
- Children missing from education – including persistent absence.
- Child Exploitation (including both Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation and county lines, modern day slavery and trafficking).
- Cybercrime.
- Modern slavery, including trafficking, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, and indicators that a child may be controlled or moved for the purpose of exploitation.
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- So-called Honour based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage),
- Online Safety
- Mental health
- Child on child abuse:
    - Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
    - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse).
    - 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 nudes and semi-nude images and or videos, including AI generated or manipulated content, such as deepfakes.
    - 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).
- Preventing Radicalisation (The Prevent Duty).
- Serious Youth Violence.
- Substance Misuse.
- Private Fostering.
- Young Carers.
- Forced Migration.
- Financial exploitation, including where children are coerced, controlled, or manipulated in relation to money, debt, benefits, gifts, transport, or access to goods.

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex B); the NSPCC website - Types of Abuse; and for localised resources

for education settings The Bristol Safeguarding in Education website. Additional information about types of abuse and neglect can be found in Appendix D (Types of Abuse and Neglect).

9. Reporting Concerns

Staff must record and reporting concerns to the DSL or Deputies in a timely way. If a child is in immediate danger they will phone the police.

All staff are aware of and follow the procedures to respond to a concern about a child as set out in Appendix B. (Reporting Concerns). This includes how to respond to child-on-child harm and children who present with a mental health need.

Students can raise any concerns via multiple routes including via their tutor, a Learning Mentor, Deputy Head of Year, or Head of Year. They can also report anonymously using the Year group letterboxes and via safeguarding@smrt.brstol.sch.uk and a report will always be taken seriously.

10. Information Sharing

We are committed to having due regard to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the Data protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations. This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Staff are aware that:

- 'Safeguarding' and 'individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows a designated member of staff to share special category personal data.
- The designated member of staff will seek consent to share data where possible in line with Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2024.

There may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent, such as:

- When to gain consent would place a child at risk,
- By doing so will compromise a criminal investigation,
- It cannot be reasonably expected that a designated member of staff gains consent,
- Or, if by sharing information, it will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

There are also times when this School will not provide student's personal data where the serious harm test under legislation is met, (by sharing the information the child may be at further risk). Where doubt exists, the School will seek legal advice.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations 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.

Where information is shared, the school will ensure decisions are necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely, and secure, and that the rationale is clearly recorded.

11. Identifying and Monitoring the Needs of Vulnerable Children

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will regularly review and monitor those children who have been identified as vulnerable. This can include reviewing attendance data, behaviour data, attainment data, and safeguarding records. This is to ensure that:

- Proportionate and early interventions can be taken to promote the safety and welfare of the child and prevent escalation of harm.
- Information about vulnerable students is shared with staff to promote educational outcomes.
- Learners who currently have, or have had, a social worker will have their academic progress and attainment reviewed and additional academic support will be provided to help them reach their full potential.
- Reasonable adjustments are made in relation to interventions, e.g. responding to behaviour. Children who have been repeatedly removed from the classroom, placed on a part-time timetable, or whose attendance indicates emerging concern, will be considered for Early Help, safeguarding review, and proportionate multi-agency discussion where needed.

12. Multi-agency Working

Our School is a relevant agency in the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership and will work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including identifying and responding to their needs. This follows statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children .

The school will understand and apply local safeguarding thresholds, including access to Early Help and Family Help arrangements, and will contribute information and professional analysis promptly so that children and families receive the right support at the right time.

Occasions that warrant a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989:

- If the child is in need under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 (including when a child is a young carer and or subject to a private fostering arrangement).
- Or if the child needs protection under s.47 of the Children Act 1989 where they are experiencing significant harm, or likely to experience significant harm.

Referrals in these cases should be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSLs) to Children's Social Care in the local authority in which that child resides (see Reporting Concerns Flow Chart and Safeguarding Concerns Flow Chart in Appendix B). A list of Multi-Agency Safeguarding contacts other key Bristol safeguarding contacts, and other local authority safeguarding contacts are also set out in Appendix B (Reporting Concerns).

Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager. If the child is a child in care, notification should also be made to the Hope Virtual School.

Our School will co-operate with any statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: this includes ensuring representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings, initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

Additional considerations

- Where a student and/or their family is subject to an inter-agency child protection plan or a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meeting, we will contribute to the preparation, implementation, and review of the plan as appropriate.
- In situations where a child in care may be put on to a reduced timetable, we will consult with the Hope Virtual School following local procedures.
- If a crime has been suspected or committed that involved the bringing of an offensive weapon on to our site, we will liaise with the Local Authority Violence Reduction Unit (Safer Connections) who will consider a proportionate response.
- If there is a risk of harm, the police will be called via 999. For other concerns of criminality, the non-statutory guidance 'When to Call the Police' from the NCPCC will be considered and/or we will contact our Neighbourhood Policing Team.
- In the rare event that a child death occurs, or a child is seriously harmed, this School will notify the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership as soon as is reasonably possible.

13. Suspensions, Permanent Exclusions, and Commissioning of Alternative Provisions

This section of this Policy should be read in conjunction with our Good Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

When we are considering suspending or permanently excluding a student where additional vulnerability is identified, the student's welfare will be a paramount consideration. The Headteacher will consider their legal duty of care when sending a student home and will be alert to the need for early help for a child who:

- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home, or care.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of being permanently excluded from school, is in ALP (Alternative Learning Provision) or a PRU (Pupil Referral Unit).

The school will also consider whether repeated removal from class, internal isolation, reduced timetables, or other restrictive responses are indicators of unmet need, vulnerability, or escalating safeguarding risk.

We will exercise our legal duties in relation to interventions. This includes:

- Whether a statutory assessment should be considered in line with the principles of Children Act 1989,
- That decisions are made in an anti-discriminatory manner in line with the Equality Act 2010 (including having regard to the SEND Code of Practice) and takes into consideration the learner's rights under the Human Rights Act 1998.
- That interventions will be consistent with statutory guidance Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement

Actions

An assessment of need will be undertaken with multi-agency partners with a view to mitigate any identified risk of harm this in line with the Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable children section of this Policy.

- If the child is subject to a child protection plan or where there is an existing child protection file, we will call a multiagency risk-assessment meeting prior to making the decision to exclude.
- In the event of a one-off serious incident resulting in an immediate decision to exclude, a risk assessment **must** be completed prior to convening the review meeting with members of the governing body.

Commissioning Alternative Provisions

In the event where we commission alternative provision, the Bristol City Council Alternative Learning Provision process will apply and their guidance followed to ensure clear agreement of roles and responsibilities to maintain safeguarding arrangements for children who are not taught on site. The Department of Education (DfE) has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which we must also have regard to when commissioning alternative provision:

- Alternative Provision
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school

We will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of the child and will make necessary checks on the provider to meet the needs of the child. Reviews will be undertaken regularly to provide assurance that any child in the provision is regularly attending and that the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's need. Written confirmation from the alternative provider will be obtained of the checks on staff that we would otherwise perform for our own staff.

Before and during any alternative provision placement, the school will obtain and record assurance that safeguarding arrangements are appropriate, including attendance monitoring, information sharing, named contacts, risk assessment, suitability of the provision, and confirmation that relevant safer recruitment checks have been completed.

14. Children Missing from Education (CME)

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, or may be an indicator of need for early help support. Our school treats unexplained absence, persistent absence, severe absence, repeated missing episodes and children leaving without a known destination as safeguarding indicators requiring prompt follow-up, information sharing and recording. Staff must follow procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. These must be reported to the DSL and reviewed in line with the Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable children section of this Policy.

We will follow the guidance detailed in Children Missing Education (2016) and Bristol City Council Education Welfare Service – Children Missing Education. This will include notifying the local authority in which the child lives:

- Of any student who fails to attend school regularly, OR
- Or any student who has been absent without our permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.
- When a student is removed from roll, joins the school, moves to another setting, is withdrawn for elective home education, or where the school cannot establish the child's whereabouts, in line with local authority processes and the statutory CME guidance.

Elective Home Education
We will notify the Local Authority of every student where a parent/carer has exercised their right to educate their child at home. Safeguarding files will be shared with the Local Authority Elective Home Education service and consideration of whether additional support from children's social care should be made in line with the Children Act 1989.

Elective home education decisions should be considered carefully where there are existing safeguarding concerns, patterns of poor attendance, exploitation concerns, or disengagement from education, and the school will share relevant safeguarding information promptly with the local authority.

15. Responding to Incidents of Child-on-child Abuse

The flow chart in Appendix B (Safeguarding Concerns Flow Chart) summarises the following information.

All staff must recognise that children can abuse other children (including online). It is important that incidents of abuse and harm are treated following this Policy and in conjunction with our Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy. However, concerns regarding the welfare of children requires process and records to be kept on the student's CPOM record.

Child-on-child abuse may include discriminatory behaviour, including behaviour linked to race, faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment. Staff will take concerns seriously and consider the needs and safety of all children involved.

This includes recognising harmful sexual behaviour, the role of misogyny in shaping abusive attitudes and behaviour, and the fact that technology can be used to facilitate, amplify, or record abuse, including through self-generated intimate images, image-based abuse, and AI-generated content.

Further examples of child-on-child harm this can be found under the Key Safeguarding Areas section of this Policy. It is recognised that child-on-child abuse can happen inside and outside of this School or online.

At this School:

- We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to abuse. Incidents are taken seriously. These will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter,' just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up.' Banter and teasing can and should be acknowledged and recognised as bullying behaviour and may require proportionate intervention.
- Even with a zero-tolerance approach, we take steps to educate and take action to ensure we mitigate the risk of contributing to a culture of unacceptable behaviours or a culture that normalises abuse.
- It is understood that child-on-child harm may reflect equality issues in terms of those who may be targeted are more likely to have protected characteristics.
- Early identification of vulnerability to child-on-child abuse is made by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.

There are clear systems in place (which are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for students to confidently report abuse knowing their concerns will be treated effectively as reflected in the Reporting a Concern section of this Policy. We will handle initial reports of harm by:

- Securing the immediate safety of students involved in an incident and sourcing support for other students affected.
- Listening carefully to the student, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the student where necessary with open questions (where, when, what, etc).
- Ensuring that victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. They will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Ensuring the student's wishes are taken into consideration in any intervention, and any action is taken to ensure safety of the target and other members of our community.
- All staff should be aware that students may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Not promising confidentiality as it is highly likely that information will need to be shared with others.

Actions to take in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment

This School will take the following actions when responding to incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment:

- Incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL/ Deputy DSL who will undertake further assessment of what action should be taken proportionate to the factors that have been identified. Digital-safety-plan-Shore.pdf will be utilised to inform assessment of risk and what actions to subsequently take.
- Incidents that have been reported to the police will be followed by a HSB Safety plan, where there are two or more students directly involved from this School. Parents/carers will be involved in the creation of this plan.
- DSLs/Deputies will take proportionate action and consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with the section the Multi-Agency Working section of this Policy.
- When an incident involves an act of **sexual violence** (rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault) the starting point is that this should be passed on to police immediately **regardless** of the age of criminal responsibility (10 years old). This must be reported directly via 101 for recording purposes and accountability. This is on the understanding that the police will take a welfarist approach rather than a criminal justice one. A concurrent referral to social care must also be made. A strategy meeting can be requested where education professionals can explicitly voice concerns of criminalisation in a multi-agency context.
- When the children involved require a statutory assessment either under s.17 or s.47 of the Children Act 1989 a referral to social care should be undertaken.
- Where the report includes an online element, we will follow Searching, screening and confiscation at school and Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The guidance provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.

- Risk assessments and/or safety plans will be developed for individual children who have been involved in an incident including any bystanders. This should be reviewed at least every 3 months or every time there is an occurrence of an incident. These should involve the child and parents/carers and address contextual risks.
- Where concerns involve self-generated intimate images, manipulated images, or AI-generated content, staff will avoid viewing, copying, or forwarding material unless absolutely necessary, and will follow current guidance on searching, screening, confiscation, and responding to nude or semi-nude imagery.
- We will consider harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, and sexual violence as safeguarding concerns, not simply behaviour issues, and will record decisions, risk assessments, support for those harmed, support and challenge for those who have caused harm, and any wider contextual or cultural actions required.

Contextual safeguarding approach to child-on-child abuse
This School will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by taking a contextual approach to safeguarding by increasing safety in the contexts of which harm can occur. This can include this School environment itself, peer groups, and the neighbourhood.

Following any incidents of child-on-child abuse, the DSL/Deputies will review and consider whether any practice or environmental changes can be made in relation to any lessons learned. This can include making changes to staffing and supervision, making changes to the physical environment, and considering the utilisation and delivery of safeguarding topics on the curriculum.

16. Responding to Allegations of Abuse Made Against Professionals

Staff must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors) where they may have:
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Immediate action must be taken, i.e.:
- Do not speak to the individual it concerns.
- Allegations or concerns about colleagues, visitors, volunteers and contractors must be reported directly to the Headteacher who will follow the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part four: Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors).
- If the concern relates to Headteacher it should be reported to the Chair of Governors, who will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and they will decide on any action required.
- If there is a conflict of interest which inhibits this process of reporting, staff can report directly to the LADO.
- If allegations are regarding a member of supply staff, this School will take the lead and progress enquiries with the LADO, whilst continuing to engage and work with the employment agency.

- Allegations regarding foster carers or anyone in a position of trust working or volunteering with children should be referred to the LADO on the day that the allegation is reported. The child's allocated social worker should also be informed on the day. This School will not undertake any investigation unless the LADO advises this.

Low-level concerns

This should be read with the knowledge that there is a staff Code of Conduct (available on request) and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 4). A low-level concern is not insignificant. This process should be used in events where a concern about professional conduct does not meet the threshold set out at the beginning of this section (Responding to Allegations of Abuse Made Against Professionals).

- Reports should be made in accordance with our procedures. We have created an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer where they have found themselves in a situation.
- The DSL will address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early-stage, providing a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- Patterns of low-level concern will be reviewed to identify themes, culture issues, training needs, or wider safeguarding weaknesses.
- Review and correct any deficits in our safeguarding systems.

17. Mental Health and Wellbeing

We have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a student has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and/or may require early help/support.

We recognise that mental health concerns, absence, changes in behaviour, reduced engagement, caring responsibilities or exposure to online harm may indicate unmet need, abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff will share concerns with the DSL so that safeguarding, early help, Family Help or specialist support can be considered.

We have a member of staff who is designated as our Mental Health Lead. They support the development of knowledge and act as a point of expertise to promote the wellbeing and mental health of students. This colleague has sufficient training in mental health **and** safeguarding for them to carry out their role effectively.

We commit to undertake the following.

- Early identification of vulnerability to mental health problems by reviewing attendance, behaviour, attainment, and safeguarding records at least on a termly basis.
- Ensure that children can report and share concerns in line with the Reporting a Concern section of this policy.

Also, that:

- Staff will follow a safeguarding process in terms of reporting concerns as outlined in Appendix B (Reporting Concerns) so that the DSL and Deputy DSLs (and wider members of the safeguarding team such as the SENDCo) can assess whether there are any other vulnerabilities that can be identified and proportionate support considered.

- Staff will ensure the immediate health and safety of a child who is displaying acute mental health distress. This may require support from emergency services via 999 if the child is at risk of immediate harm.
- DSL/Deputies will consider whether a case can be managed internally, through early help, or should involve other agencies as required in line with the Multi-Agency Working section of this Policy.
- We will communicate and work with the student and parents/carers to ensure that interventions are in the best interests of the student.
- DSL/Deputies will liaise with staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made and to develop ways to support achieving positive educational outcomes.
- Only appropriately trained professionals attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. DSL/Deputies and SLT will be able to access specialist advice through targeted services or through local Primary Mental Health Specialists from Child and Family Consultation Services.

Contextual safeguarding approach to mental health
We will ensure that preventative measures in terms of providing safeguarding through the curriculum will provide opportunities for students to identify when they may need help, and to develop resilience.

We will take a 'whole school approach' to:
- Deliver high-quality teaching around mental health and wellbeing through the curriculum.
- Having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing.
- Having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing.
- Making sure students and staff are aware of and able to access a range of mental health services.
- Supporting staff wellbeing.
- Being committed to student and parent/carer participation.

18. Online Safety
Online safety is set out in our Online Safety Policy (and Acceptable Use Agreements) and is an integrated and interwoven theme with other safeguarding considerations. The DSL will take a lead on ensuring that interventions are effective. This means coordinating support and engaging with other colleagues who may have more technological expertise, e.g. our IT manager.

We are committed to addressing online safety issues around content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes:
- Ensuring that online safety is covered by relevant policies and procedures.
- That online safety is interwoven in safeguarding training for staff and safeguarding through the curriculum.
- Acknowledging that child-on-child abuse can happen via mobile and smart technology between individuals and groups. This will be approached in the same process outlined in the Responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse section of this Policy and read in conjunction with the Good Relationships and Behaviour Policy and Mobile Phone Policy.
- Provision of education via remote learning that complies with current governmental advice Providing remote education: guidance for schools.

- The effectiveness of our ability to safeguard children in respect to filtering and monitoring, information security and access management alongside the above will be reviewed annually in line with the Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges guidance.
- Online safety arrangements will consider how children may be harmed through AI-enabled manipulation, sexualised, or humiliating image generation, fraud, coercion, impersonation, and other forms of technology-facilitated abuse.
- We will assess and respond to emerging technology risks, including AI-generated imagery, deepfakes, cyber-enabled coercion, and the misuse of generative tools to bully, humiliate, exploit, or abuse children.
- Online safety leadership will include regular review of filtering and monitoring, information security, access management, mobile and smart technology use, staff training, curriculum content, and responses to online incidents, with evidence of decisions and actions retained for governance assurance.

19. Links with Other Policies

This Policy is linked to these policies which can be found on our website:

- Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy
- Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreements
- Equality Policy
- Attendance Policy

External documentation is linked throughout this Policy.

20. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been assessed for its impact on equality and does not unlawfully discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

In developing and implementing this policy, the school has given due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all members of the school community, taking account of individual needs and circumstances where appropriate.

The Governing Board and Headteacher will monitor the implementation and impact of this policy to ensure it remains compliant with equality legislation and supports the school's commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunity.

Appendix A. Key Guidance for Safeguarding Issues

All key education sector guidance relevant to our School can be found here. Other multi-agency guidance and policies from the Local Safeguarding Partnerships are as follows:

- Bristol safeguarding children
- South Glos safeguarding children

Appendix B. Reporting Concerns (see below)

- Reporting Concerns Flow Chart (Bristol)
- Safeguarding Concerns Flow Chart (for responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse and Mental Health concerns)
- Multi-agency Safeguarding Contacts Poster (Bristol)
- Bristol Safeguarding in Education Local Contacts List
- Other Local Authority Safeguarding Contacts

Reporting Concerns Flow Chart - Bristol

You have concerns about a child

Child Protection concern – **act now.**

Go to speak with Safeguarding Lead immediately. If not available, find the deputy or you act.

Agree who will make the referral to First Response (and call the police on 101 if necessary).

Referral is made to First Response/Police, stating that it is a Child Protection concern.

Action is taken by the appropriate agencies

You will need to record on your own system in writing ASAP (within 24 hours). This applies whether or not you make the actual referral.

Your agency continues to participate in Child Protection Strategy or S.47 Enquiries.

Child is in immediate danger – phone 999

All other welfare and safeguarding concerns

Complete internal concern form and pass to Safeguarding Lead

Lead will assess (with discussion with staff and consultation of any safeguarding file held) to agree actions required.

Concern meets threshold for referral to First Response

Telephone First Response on 01179036444.
Parental consent is required.

First Response assesses referral and threshold (may direct to Pathway Decision Team or MASH if further information is required) and directs to:

Family Help SAF allocated, and referrer informed. Your agency participates in assessment, plan and intervention.

Child in Need S.17 enquiries. Allocated to Social Care Unit, referrer informed. Your agency participates in assessment, plan, and intervention.

Decide No Further Action (NFA) and inform your agency.

Single or multi agency led interventions/refer direct to other agencies (e.g. Brook, counselling, etc) – this equates to early help for the child

No further action – will monitor.

No matter what the outcome, keep monitoring, re-refer or escalate as appropriate. Participate in all assessments and plans. Chase referrals if not kept informed – this is our responsibility.

Safeguarding Flow Chart
Responding to Mental Health Concerns and Incidents of Child-on-Child Abuse

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 **(KCSIE)**

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. All staff should be clear about their settings' policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse **(KCSIE)**

There is a concern about child's mental health

You are made aware of an incident or pattern of child-on-child abuse

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. 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.

Secure the safety of the child (ren) involved and source support for any other young people affected

Record the concern/incident in line with your setting's safeguarding and child protection policy (e.g. on CPOMs). The DSL and deputies are notified

The concern is reviewed by the DSL and safeguarding team. Information should be cross-referenced with attendance, behaviour records, attainment and any safeguarding and child protection concerns.

Possible examples of child-on-child abuse

- **Bullying (and cyberbullying)**
- **Physical abuse**
- **Sexual violence and sexual harassment**
- **Upskirting**
- **Sexting (youth produced sexual imagery)**

Additional guidance used to respond to the concern:

- ***Mental health and behaviour in schools*** **(link)**
- ***Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing*** **(link)**

Concern and need reviewed alongside learner and family

Concern can be managed internally through setting-based early help, support and signposting.

Concern requires additional support from a targeted agency or Primary Mental Health Specialist.

Child protection concern that requires a referral to social care for an assessment under s.17 or s.47 of the Children's Act 1989. School may also refer directly to CAMHs.

Outcomes

Additional guidance used to respond to the concern

- ***Advice for Schools and Colleges on Responding to Sexting Incidents*** **(link)**
- ***Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool*** **(link)**
- ***Preventing and Tackling Bullying*** **(link)**
- ***NPCC: When to call the police*** **(link)**

Outcomes

Concerns managed internally through pastoral support, contextual safeguarding, restorative approaches, RSE/PSHE. Setting informs parents/carers of incident and actions.

Repeat incidents or that of moderate concern – Setting liaises with parents/carers. Consider seeking consent and advice for targeted/specialist services to support all children involved in the incident(s).

Clear child protection concerns/criminal issue. Make a referral to social care and/or the police for consideration of a statutory assessment.

All actions, risk assessments and responses should be recorded on the Safeguarding/Child Protection file. Plans/risk assessments should be reviewed every 3 months or on any occasion another concern is raised.

Multi-agency Safeguarding Contacts Poster

Priority safeguarding contacts		
If you have concerns about a child/young person in Bristol		
If a child is at immediate risk call the police.	**POLICE – 999**	
To make a referral where a child is likely to suffer, or is suffering, significant harm, call children's social care.	**FIRST RESPONSE – 0117 903 6444**	
Out of hours referrals.	**EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM – 01454 615 165**	
Mental health crisis support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	**Bristol Mental Health – 0300 555 0334**	
To raise concerns and ask for advice about radicalisation. Also contact First Response where appropriate.	**PREVENT DUTY – 01278 647466** **PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk**	
To liaise with the specialist safeguarding police unit.	**Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit (Avon and Somerset Police) – 01278 649228** **LighthouseBristol@avonandsomerset.police.uk**	
For advice and guidance about whether to make a referral.	**Family Help**	
South 0117 903 7770	**East Central 0117 357 6460**	**North 0117 352 1499**
To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to the conduct of someone who works with children.	**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** **T: 0117 903 7795** **KBSP LADO notification form**	
For information, advice and guidance in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures		
Safeguarding in Education Team **T: 0117 922 2532** **E: Safeguardingineducationteam@bristol.gov.uk**		
South Advisor **Helen Macdonald** **helen.macdonald@bristol.gov.uk** **0117 922 2533**	**East Central Advisor** **Elizabeth Male** **Elizabeth.male@bristol.gov.uk** **0117 922 2532**	**North Advisor** **Colin Clements** **Colin.clements@bristol.gov.uk** **0117 922 2532**

Bristol Safeguarding in Education Connections List

Urgent Referrals and Threshold Advice: For all urgent referrals, requests for service **(including Weapons and Drugs in Schools)**, and threshold advice, contact First Response: T: 0117 903 6444		
Partnership Support: To request non-urgent, non-case specific support from the Partnership Team (such as consultations, training, or coordination around emerging concerns) E: saferconnections@bristol.gov.uk		
Report a Child Missing from Education	**Bristol City Council – Education Welfare** https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/children-missing-education-cme	
Children affected by Forced Marriage	**Forced Marriage Unit** T: (0) 20 7008 0151 E: fmu@fco.gov.uk	
Online Safety Advice	**Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline** T: 0344 381 4772 E: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk	
Reporting online abuse and grooming	**Child Exploitation and Online Protection command** https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/	
FGM advice	**NSPCC FGM Helpline** T: 0800 028 3550 E: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk	
Domestic Abuse support (Bristol)	**Directorate of local and national services** **https://www.bristol.gov.uk/crime-emergencies/abuse-violence**	
Young Carers – advice and support.	**Carers Support Centre** T: 0117 958 9980 W:https://www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/young-carers/contact-young-carers/	
Whistleblowing professional policy	**NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline** T: 0800 028 0285 E: help@nspcc.org.uk	
Child and Adolescent Mental health (CAMHS)		
Primary Mental Health Specialists (advice) Child and Adolescent Mental Health		
South 0117 340 8121	**East Central** 0117 340 8600	**North** 0117 354 6800
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust 24/7 crisis line: 0800 953 1919		
Advice around harmful sexualised behaviour.	**Be Safe** 0117 3408700 W: https://www.awp.nhs.uk/camhs/camhs-services/HSB-services/be-safe	
	Brook Traffic Light Tool CPD: Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool (RSE) Course	

Other Local Authority Safeguarding Contacts

Local Authority in which the child is resident	Contact details	Out of hours/ Weekend
South Gloucestershire	**Access and Reponses Team** **T: 01454 866000** - Monday to Thursday 9.00 – 5.00, 4.30 on Friday **E:** accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk **W**: Access and Response Teams (ART) | South Gloucestershire Council (southglos.gov.uk)	**Emergency Duty Team** **01454 615165**
North Somerset	**Single Point of Access** **T: 01275 888 808 –**Monday-Thursday 8.45am-5pm, Friday 8.45am-4.30pm **W**: Children, young people and families | North Somerset Council (n-somerset.gov.uk)	
Bath and North East Somerset (BANES)	**Children's Social Work Services** **T: 01225 396312 or 01225 396313** Mon-Thurs 8:30am to 5pm, Friday 08:30-4:30pm **E:** ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk **W**:Report a concern about a child | Bath and North East Somerset Council (bathnes.gov.uk)	

Appendix C. Dealing with a disclosure of abuse, neglect, or exploitation

When a student tells me about abuse, neglect, or exploitation they have suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger, or embarrassment.
- Reassure the student. Tell them you are pleased that they are speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure them that you will try to help but let the student know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Encourage the student to talk but do not ask 'leading questions' or press them for information. Use 'Tell Me, Explain to me, Describe to me' (TED) questioning.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the student is trying to tell you.
- Praise the student for telling you. Communicate that they have a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged perpetrator.
- Be aware that the student may retract what they have told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the student again who you are going to tell, and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the student's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. Record the concern, actions taken, decisions made, the rationale for decisions, and any outcome, then share this promptly with the DSL or deputy DSL.

It is not a member of staff's role to seek a disclosure. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available, and try to make time to talk.

The **5 'R's** clarify what professional's duties are in relation to responding to an incident.
Recognise – Respond – Reassure – Refer - Record

Appendix D. Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are defined as the maltreatment of a child whereby someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another. For students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect, these include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the student's disability without further exploration, professional curiosity, or safeguarding consideration.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other students.
- The potential for students with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges, we consider additional pastoral support for children with SEND.

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children, however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services. Our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our students and where we have concerns that a student may be at risk of abuse and neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

We will use the safeguarding definitions and terminology in the current Keeping Children Safe in Education document. Staff briefings, training, and policy references will be updated when changes are published.

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

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent/carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Racism and faith-targeted abuse: can cause significant harm to a child's welfare, safety, sense of belonging and emotional wellbeing. Staff will recognise, record and report these concerns and consider whether wider safeguarding action or support is required.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Staff should also be alert to exploitation, harm outside the home, online harm, financial exploitation, modern slavery and technology-facilitated abuse. These concerns may overlap with the four categories of abuse and should be reported to the DSL without delay.

Appendix E. Specific actions to take on topical safeguarding issues

General or national guidance is not reproduced in full here. Further information is signposted in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Annex A, while the role of the designated safeguarding lead is set out in KCSIE 2026 Annex B. Access to local guidance can be found in Appendix A of this document. This appendix highlights local and practical actions that settings may need to take in response to topical safeguarding concerns.

In recognition that the threshold of child protection is 'likely to suffer' significant harm, our School may need to make a referral to children's social care. Where possible, this will involve notifying the parent/carer if it does not place the student at further risk of harm. In all other circumstances information will be shared in line with section Information Sharing.

For each topical safeguarding concern, staff should consider: immediate safety, whether the child needs Early Help or Family Help, whether statutory social care referral is required, whether information should be shared with police or another agency, and what should be recorded on CPOMs.

It is also important to recognise the importance of liaising with other education settings who may have siblings attending. It is likely that they may hold additional information which will support early identification of harm and in turn develop our assessment of need.

Harm Outside the Home (HOtH) – including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), county lines, online harm, modern slavery, and child on child abuse.

We will ensure that early help intervention is provided as soon as a concern of HOtH is identified. Consultation and advice will be sought from Local Authority and targeted services to consider the appropriate support available. The student and their family will be part of any planning and interventions.

- If there is evidence that a child is experiencing HOtH we will make a referral to First Response on 0117 903 6444.
- If there is intelligence or information which indicates that the student or group of students are at risk of, or involved in, criminality, we will share information with the police via 101 or online via Avon and Somerset Police's online reporting form. This information will support proactive activity to disrupt criminal activity in relation to exploitation or harm outside the home more broadly.
- We will contact Safer Connections (saferconnections@bristol.gov.uk) for inter-agency support, consultation, and advice about responding to HOtH and for guidance in implementing contextual safeguarding strategies to improve safety for vulnerable students.
- This section should be read in conjunction with the above section on Child Criminal Exploitation. Local guidance has been issued on offensive weapons in education settings: Offensive Weapons in Education Settings: Guidance for Education Settings and Weapons in Schools: What should schools do?

Domestic Abuse

Operation Encompass is a national information sharing scheme where education settings are notified when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse. This scheme enables us to take proactive action and make reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes.

Under the current information sharing protocol, professionals are **not permitted** to share information without first seeking consent from Avon and Somerset police in case this will put victims and children at further risk of harm. The only exception to this is when information is shared with a new education setting (as part of our statutory duties in relation to the transfer of the Safeguarding/Child Protection file (KCSIE)).

We will follow Bristol's Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures when receiving and managing information through Operation Encompass. We will promote an open culture of safeguarding to enable students and families to disclose and feel safe to talk about their experiences and what support may be required.

Female Genital Mutilation

A. Mandatory Reporting

This is the legal duty for all professionals undertaking teaching work to report known cases of FGM to the police via 101, when they:

1. Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; OR
2. Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out.

These cases must be referred to our DSL who will support staff to carry out their reporting duty. Any referrals made to the police under the mandatory reporting duty will be followed up with children's social care by the DSL, so that an assessment of need and support is concurrently considered.

B. Travel

National guidance has highlighted that going on holiday to a risk affected country is cause for concern, and local guidance has been developed to prevent discriminatory action against families from risk affected communities.

- Families are encouraged to notify us when they are looking to travel during term time dates.
- This will prompt a conversation with the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team to discuss and explain what FGM is, in that it is significantly harmful and illegal to practice this.
- We will complete an FGM Referral Risk assessment (available on the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership website) with the family to identify any support that the family may require in relation to FGM.
- Proportionate action will be taken. Referrals to social care will **not** be automatically made, however they will be made if there are high risk concerns identified from the FGM Referral Risk Assessment.
- These assessments will be saved onto the student's Safeguarding/Child Protection file to avoid duplication with new incidents of travel.

Online Safety

- The school understands and responds to evolving online risks, including AI-generated imagery, deepfakes, cyber-enabled abuse, and the misuse of technology to facilitate harmful sexual behaviour.
- For concerns around individual cases where a student has been harmed through online mediums, advice and guidance can be made through the Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline, T: 0344 381 4772, E: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
- Where there have been established cases of online abuse or grooming, we will alert Child Exploitation and Online Protection command (CEOP)**.**

Mental Health

Refer to the Mental Health section of this Policy.

Harm Outside the Home (HOtH) – including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), county lines, online harm, modern slavery, child on child abuse.

- We will ensure that Early Help intervention is provided as soon as a concern of HOtH is identified. Consultation and advice will be sought from the Local Authority and targeted services to consider the appropriate support available. The child and their family will be part of any planning and interventions.
- If there is evidence that a child is experiencing HOtH the school will make a referral to First Response on 0117 903 6444.

- If there is intelligence or information which indicates that the child or group of children are at risk of or involved in criminality, [Name of school] will share information with the police via 101 or online via Avon and Somerset Police's online reporting form: Report child sexual exploitation | Avon and Somerset Police This information will support proactive activity to disrupt criminal activity in relation to exploitation or harm outside the home more broadly.
- We will contact Safer Connections for inter-agency support, consultation, and advice about responding to HOtH and for guidance in implementing contextual safeguarding strategies to improve safety for vulnerable learners. saferconnections@bristol.gov.uk

Serious Youth Violence

To be read in conjunction with the above section around Child Criminal Exploitation. There has been local guidance issued on the issue of **Offensive Weapons in Education Settings Guidance for Education Settings**.

- If a child is found in possession of a knife, bladed item or offensive weapon on school premises, this is likely to constitute a criminal offence. An offensive weapon is any item made, adapted, or intended to cause injury to a person, and there is no 'educational purpose' defence for them being in possession on school site.
- Indicators of serious violence may include unexplained injuries, absence, changes in friendship groups, fearfulness, coercion, debt, possession of weapons, association with exploitative adults or peers, and online content linked to violence, threats or humiliation.
- If a knife, bladed article or offensive weapon is found on school premises, the school will call the police **immediately**. As possession is likely to be a criminal offence, investigation of the incident must be led by the police.

- School will focus on immediate safety and safeguarding, including calm, supportive conversations with the child to understand welfare or protection needs, while avoiding investigative questioning if possible.
- School will make a safeguarding referral if there are additional welfare concerns around the child.
- The police will notify Youth Justice Services (YJS) within one working day of a child being found in possession of a knife or weapon. The child will be formally interviewed by the police and YJS will begin an assessment of the child's needs, risks and circumstances.
- YJS will attend the school as soon as possible to speak with the child, alongside the school, family, and safeguarding partners. They will offer a minimum of six intervention sessions at school.
- Safer Connections will support the school with safety planning and contextual safeguarding.
- Whilst it is acknowledged that the decision to exclude remains with the Headteacher it is recommended that consultation with the Safer Connections Team is made so as not to further put the child at further risk of harm if they are excluded.
- Any response will include a recorded safeguarding assessment, safety planning, consideration of contextual risk, information sharing with relevant agencies and review of whether siblings, peers, or locations are also affected.
- Alternatives to exclusions should be considered first in recognition that by doing so a student may be at further risk of harm out in the community.

Preventing Radicalisation (The Prevent duty)
All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty is considered part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputies, and other senior leaders will familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools.

Prevent concerns will be managed as part of the school's wider safeguarding arrangements. Staff will report concerns to the DSL or deputy DSL, who will consider local referral pathways, information sharing, early intervention, and whether wider safeguarding needs are present.

The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes:
- Risk assessment
- Working in partnership
- Staff training
- IT policies
- Reducing permissive environments, including online environments, where extremist narratives or terrorist content could be accessed, promoted, or normalised.

Private Fostering
A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child:

- Under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled)
- By someone other than a parent or close relative (*Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents, or cousins.)
- With the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

Cases of private fostering arrangements must be reported to children's social care to ensure that needs are adequately assessed and that the local authority can satisfy itself that the arrangement safeguards and promotes the child's welfare.

Statutory guidance states that this should be done at least 6 weeks before the arrangement is due to start or as soon as you are made aware of the arrangements. Not to do so is a criminal offence.

Further support and reasonable adjustments should be made by the education setting to promote achievement of positive educational outcomes.

Where a private fostering arrangement is identified, the school will record who has been informed, when the referral or notification was made, any advice received, and any support or reasonable adjustments needed to help the child remain safe and engaged in education.

Young Carers
A young carer is a person under 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell, or who misuses substances.

Young carers may need early help or wider safeguarding support where caring responsibilities affect attendance, punctuality, learning, emotional wellbeing, family relationships, or access to wider childhood opportunities.

Staff should consider young carer status alongside attendance, punctuality, fatigue, concentration, homework completion, emotional presentation, and family stress, and should avoid relying on the child to manage caring responsibilities without appropriate assessment and support.

The school will support learners who are young carers to appropriate support. What is available locally can be found on the Bristol City Council Website.

The Carers Support Centre can undertake an assessment of need and provide bespoke support. Further information and how to make a referral can be found on the Carers Support Centre website.

Children from Forced Migration
Children with a forced migration background may be more vulnerable to criminal or sexual exploitation or may have been trafficked. Staff will understand what signs to look out for and understand the National Referral Mechanism procedures.

There are other specific safeguarding issues relating to this group, for example adultification, age assessments, No Recourse to Public Funds, and coming from countries where practices such as underage or forced marriage or FGM may be more prevalent.

Staff will be alert to trafficking, modern slavery, exploitation, missing episodes, interrupted education, language barriers, trauma, adultification, uncertainty about age, immigration-related stress and barriers to accessing services. Concerns should be discussed with the DSL and referred through local safeguarding pathways where needed.

The school will support staff to develop and embed a proactive whole school anti-racist approach and adopt a trauma informed approach when supporting these children and their families.

There are a range of specialist support services available in the city that can be accessed for further information: Resources for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Bristol - Bristol City of Sanctuary web pages.

Appendix F. Addendum Policy in the event of a national or local lockdown.

Our Lockdown Policy is available to staff via the staff intranet.