



THE CONSORTIUM  
ACADEMY TRUST

Shaping Positive Futures

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

The Consortium Academy Trust (TCAT)  
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number 07665828

Status:	Live
Policy Owner (position)	Trust Designated Safeguarding Lead
Statutory / Recommended	Statutory
Date Adopted	October 2018
Review Period	Annual
Latest Review Date	September 2022
Revision	7
Next Review Date	September 2023
Advisory Committee	Trust Board
Linked Documents and Policies	Health and Safety Policy Alternative Provision Policy Anti-Bullying Policy E-Safety Policy Disciplinary Policy Recruitment Procedure Staff Code of Conduct Whistleblowing Policy Educational Visits Policy Equal Opportunities Policy Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy SEND Policy Low Level Concerns Policy Positive Handling Policy Safeguarding Report to Governors Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Education Act (2002) Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)

*\*NB – This document can only be considered valid when viewed on The Consortium Academy Trust website. If the copy is printed or downloaded and saved elsewhere the Policy date should be cross referenced to ensure the current document is referenced*

## ADVICE AND CONTACT LIST

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<b>Safeguarding and Partnership Hub</b>	CP initial referral Support & Advice: Intensive & Specialist Safeguarding support 1. Urgent CP concerns 2. Consultation with Social Worker	Mon to Thu 8:30am – 5:00pm Fri 8:30am – 4:30pm 01482-395500 Request for service forms to: safeguardingchildrenshub@eastriding.gov.uk
<b>Children’s Emergency Duty Team</b>		01482 395500
<b>Early Help Locality Hub</b>	Additional Support for children & families initial consultation	Consultation 01482 391700 Request for Service form to the Hub nearest to where the child lives ehp.bridlington@eastriding.gov.uk ehp.beverley@eastriding.gov.uk ehp.goole@eastriding.gov.uk ehp.haltemprice@eastriding.gov.uk ehp.hedon@eastriding.gov.uk ehp.wolds@eastriding.gov.uk
<b>Local ER Children Safeguarding Team</b>	Safeguarding Officers Tahnee Burgess / Tara Baker / Nicola Spray  Safeguarding admin support Millie Critchley	01482 392343 lorraine.wilson@eastriding.gov.uk siobhan.bath@eastriding.gov.uk
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<b>LADO</b>	Jayne Hammill/Siobhan Bath Referral of allegations against staff & volunteers	LADO@eastriding.gov.uk
<b>Humberside Police</b>	ER Protecting Vulnerable People Unit	01482 220809
<b>Humberside Police</b>	Hate Crime / incident reporting	101 <a href="https://www.reportingcrime.uk/HPhatecrime/">https://www.reportingcrime.uk/HPhatecrime/</a>
<b>Local Authority Safeguarding Children Partnership</b>	ERSCP	<a href="https://www.erscp.co.uk/">https://www.erscp.co.uk/</a> 01482-396994 erscp.enquiries@eastriding.gov.uk
<b>Hull North Yorkshire North Lincolnshire Northeast Lincolnshire</b>	Children's Social Care	01482 448879 EDT 01482 300304 01609 780780 EDT 01609 780780 01724 296500 EDT 01724 296500 01472 326292 EDT 01472 326292
<b>Prevent Referral</b>	Humberside Police ERY LA	101 / <a href="mailto:prevent@humberside.pnn.police.uk">prevent@humberside.pnn.police.uk</a> <a href="mailto:prevent@eastriding.gov.uk">prevent@eastriding.gov.uk</a>

## Abbreviations

DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSG	Designated Safeguarding Governor
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
ER	East Riding
KCSiE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LA	Local Authority
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PSCHE	Personal, Social, Citizenship, and Health Education
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is in response to:

- 1) Sections 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, implemented June 2004
- 2) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' issued by the DfE in 2022

It is in line with the relevant Safeguarding Partnership's Child Protection Procedures and DfE guidance.

We will follow the Local Interagency Procedures:

- Hull Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP)
- East Riding Safeguarding Children's Partnership (ERSCP)

This policy applies to all adults, including supply staff and volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school or the Trust.

Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in education settings
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the education setting

## 2. THE CONSORTIUM ACADEMY TRUST COMMITMENT

At the Consortium Academy Trust ('the Trust'), we are committed to the safeguarding and the promoting of welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We recognise that abuse can take place in any organisation.

Our Trust will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty, underpinned by established, well publicised and robust safeguarding procedures
- Incorporate across the curriculum, teaching / learning and opportunities that equip children with the skills and knowledge they need to stay safe from abuse and develop resilience and an awareness of possible grooming or influence by violent extremist ideas and the dangers and consequences in engaging in inappropriate behaviour online
- Ensure that all forms of unpleasantness and harassment, including allegations of child-on-child abuse, sexual violence, and sexual harassment, hate incidents and online bullying & abusive behaviour are dealt with at the appropriate level and in line with national and local guidance and procedures and not dismissed as immature behaviour or banter
- Educate all children and staff in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment and ensure everyone knows this is not okay and will not be tolerated in our school or our community
- Ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies
- Ensure that staff understand when to make referrals to the DSL when there are indicators or concerns of possible neglect, sexual, physical, or emotional harm and indicators of possible child sexual & criminal exploitation, female genital mutilation, radicalisation, school attendance concerns, child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and forced marriage and that they have access to additional advice and support

- Operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children
- Ensure that staff are aware of how and when to act on concerns that they have, and work in a safe and appropriate manner. They are aware that they are in a position of trust and what the implications are in relation to their working practice and out of school conduct and that their conduct towards children must remain beyond reasonable reproach
- Fulfil the 'Duty of Care' towards staff by providing appropriate safeguarding guidance, induction and continuing training and support as required by KCSiE, 2022

Through working together, we will be 'Shaping Positive Futures'.

### **3. PREVENTION**

#### **3.1 Safer Recruitment and Selection**

The Trust complies fully with Statutory Guidance KCSiE 2022, 'Part Three: Safer recruitment', in relation to adverts, application process, shortlisting and related reference seeking and consideration of standardised online checks on candidate at the shortlisted stage, employment history, selection and pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information.

Trust schools ensure that DBS checks on all staff, Governors and volunteers who are engaged in Regulated Activity are carried out as outlined and required in KCSiE, 2022. This includes a check with the children's barred list and would alert the school to any Secretary of State section 128 direction. All other required vetting as outlined in KCSiE, 2022 will be completed.

The school also ensures that for all other staff (e.g. contractors) who may have regular contact with children, who are not engaging in regulated activity HAVE the appropriate level of DBS checks are either carried out or confirmation of such checks are completed.

An accurate Single Central Record (SCR) is maintained in line with statutory guidance.

The Headteacher and at least one Governor complete appropriate Safer Recruitment training which must be updated every 3 years. All appointment panels will have at least one member who has completed this training in the last 3 years.

All staff that are covered by the:

'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Statutory guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools Aug 2018' and are aware of their responsibilities to disclose any possible matters (e.g., convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, and warnings) that need to be considered under this act. If such disclosures are made, the Headteacher will seek advice from the Trust People service and will liaise with the LADO.

If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, on our behalf, including Agency Supply staff, we will obtain written assurances that these organisations have appropriate safeguarding, safer recruitment, and vetting procedures in place.

Where a child is placed in an alternative provision provider, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Leader will continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child. Appropriate checks will be undertaken to ensure the provider meets the needs of the child, including written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.

Where the work experience placements are organised, The Hessle Academy will follow the advice and guidance as identified in Part three of KCSiE 2022.

Where homestays as part of exchange visits are occurring, The Hessle Academy will follow the advice and guidance as identified in Part three and Annex D of KCSiE 2022.

### **3.2 Safe Practice**

Each school undertakes Child Safeguarding training for all staff and updates this training throughout the year. In addition, Staff and Governors complete annual Safeguarding training. Staff also complete online Prevent and Online Safety training every two years.

In addition, the Trust's Staff Code of Conduct outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour towards children and young people.

Safe working practice ensures that children are safe and that all staff:

- Are responsible for their own action and behaviours and know how to avoid any conduct which could lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
- Work in an open and transparent way
- Discuss and/or take advice from the school management over any incident which may give rise to concern
- Record any incidents or decisions made in relation to a child or young person
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality
- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them

### **3.3 Partnerships with Others**

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Although inter agency working and information sharing are vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, it is clear they are especially important to identify and prevent child sexual and/or criminal exploitation.

The Trust recognises that it is essential to establish positive and effective working relationships with other agencies. These include the Local Authority, Social Care, Barnardo's, Police, Health, Childline, NSPCC, Surestart etc.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

### **3.4 School Training and Staff Induction**

Each school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete their Local Authority's Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Lead Training and other requirements set by their Local Authority. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff with child protection responsibilities (pastoral leaders), the Headteacher and all senior staff will complete the Advanced Child Protection and Safeguarding online training, through the National College.

The Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Leader will ensure their school staff undertake Child Safeguarding training regularly. All Staff and Governors complete annual safeguarding training online through the National College. Staff also complete Prevent, FGM and Online Safety training every two years. Additional safeguarding training will take place in each school based on local concerns.

All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) are provided with a Child Protection and Safeguarding Induction prior to taking up appointment and are provided with a copy of this policy and other relevant policies during induction.

The Trust aims to provide training/meeting time for Designated Safeguarding Leaders on a half termly basis.

All staff will be made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Trustees will receive an appropriate level of training to provide them with the necessary knowledge to ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are effective. This may be delivered face to face or online.

### **3.5 Support, Advice and Guidance for Staff**

Staff will be supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will provide guidance and training where appropriate. They will be supported by the Headteacher and through the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Leader. Advice and support are always available from the Local Authority's Social Work Team and further advice is available from the Police.

### **3.6 On-line Safety**

KCSiE 2022, outlines the need for staff and Governors to receive training covering online safety and that it is essential that there is a whole school approach towards online safety, spanning training, curriculum content and teaching, communication with parents/carers and school IT resources (appropriate filtering and monitoring etc).

Accordingly, the DSL will ensure that all staff / Governors receive online safety training as part of induction and that ongoing online safety training and updates for all staff will be integrated, aligned, and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach.

The DSL, supported by relevant colleagues (e.g. Head of Information / Technicians, e-safety Lead and Curriculum Leaders), will take the lead role in overseeing and have responsibility for online safety and the management of this is a safeguarding issue. The DSL will keep the Headteacher and DSG updated as appropriate of any incidents and the DSG will report on online safety practice and incidents, including outcomes, on a regular basis to the wider Governing Body.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The Trust has website filtering and monitoring software on all computers and devices available in its academies.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, each school offers a curriculum which covers the need for safeguarding, including online. The curriculum offers Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). This is covered through specific lessons or PSHCE, tutor groups and the assembly programmes. Systems are in place to ensure that the online content that children can access via school systems is carefully filtered and monitored to ensure that they do not have access to concerning content.

### **3.7 Related Policies**

Safeguarding covers more than the contribution made to child protection in relation to individual children. It also encompasses issues such as child health and safety and bullying and a range of other issues, for example, arrangements for meeting the medical needs of children, providing first aid, school security, drugs, and substance misuse etc. There may also be other safeguarding issues that are specific to the local area of population.



Other related Trust Policies and Protocols that should be referred to include:

Health and Safety Policy  
Anti-Bullying Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
Disciplinary Policy  
Recruitment Procedure  
Staff Code of Conduct  
Whistleblowing Procedure  
Educational Visits Policy  
Equal Opportunities Policy  
Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy  
SEND Policy  
Low Level Concerns Policy  
Alternative Provision Policy  
Positive Handling Policy

### **3.8 Student Information / Record Keeping and Transferring / Retaining Records**

It is essential to keep timely, detailed, accurate and accessible records to protect children effectively. At all times Information Sharing guidance and GDPR (2018) will be followed.

All staff are made aware of the need to record, and report concerns about a child or children within our school immediately to the DSL. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the member of staff will consult with the DSL before completing CPOMS as reporting urgent concerns must always take priority. If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they will discuss their concerns with the DSL – always observing the principle “IF IN DOUBT, SHARE”.

The DSL is responsible for such records and for deciding at what point these records should be shared with, or transferred to other agencies or schools, in consultation with the Headteacher or appropriate Senior Manager. Child protection records will be kept confidential and stored securely, will be kept for individual children, and will be maintained separately from all other records relating to the child. Separate child or if appropriate, family CP files are only accessed on CPOMS. Only the DSLs, Headteacher and other appropriate Senior or Pastoral Staff have access to these files.

The information may be shared with other agencies as appropriate and in some cases used as evidence by other agencies in-line with current information sharing guidance and GDPR (2018). Only factual verified information is recorded as such. Information ‘reported’ by outside individuals is clearly indicated as such.

Parents may request to read their child’s file under a Data Subject Access Request. Schools will seek legal or safeguarding advice from the Trust, if such a request is made to ensure that only appropriate information is disclosed depending on the circumstances and any ‘3rd party’ information that will need to be redacted.

The DSL will decide what information needs to be shared within school with whom and when on a case-by-case basis. Confidentiality is essential but staff working with children can only provide effective support and monitor concerns if they are made aware that there are concerns or at the least that individual children are being monitored.

Child Protection records are reviewed, using the RASHEN system to check whether any action, advice or updating is needed.

All child protection records will be transferred in accordance with data protection legislation to the child’s subsequent school, under confidential and separate cover as soon as possible; within 5 days for an in-

year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. Child protection files will be transferred securely to the new DSL, separately to the child's main file, and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained.

Records are sent electronically through CPOMS. Any paper records, if possible, will be handed to the receiving school separately from other records and marked 'Private & Confidential for the attention of the DSL'. If sending by post records will be

- (1) sealed in an envelope and marked as above and
- (2) sealed in an addressed envelope before sending by recorded delivery

In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL at the new school or college in advance of a child leaving, for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue to provide support.

Where the school receives child protection files from another setting, the DSL will ensure key staff such as the Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) / named person with oversight for SEND, will be made aware of relevant information as required.

Where a child joins the school and no child protection files are received, the DSL will proactively seek to confirm from the previous setting whether any child protections exist for the child, and if so, if the files have been sent.

The current early years, education or skills setting is regarded as the 'Custodian of the records.' Records should be retained by the setting they attended at 18 up to the 25th birthday of the person and then destroyed at the earliest convenience.

### **3.9 Roles and Responsibilities**

#### Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL)

A full outline of the role and responsibilities of the DSL can be found in KCSiE, 2022, Annex C. In line with this, the DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and has overarching responsibility for ongoing oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety). The DSL or DDSL (or another appropriately trained senior member of staff) will be available on site when the school is open to coordinate and advise staff or respond to urgent Child Protection matters.

Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated (e.g., to the DDSL and within the pastoral structures), the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.

Key aspects of the role are:

- Providing advice and support and information to staff as appropriate, acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss safeguarding arrangements
- Oversee staff safeguarding training and share / cascade information
- Ensuring that safer recruitment and staff induction procedures are in place and followed
- Liaising with the LA and other agencies including the involvement in Early Help Assessments and plans and managing any involvement with any multi-agency plans / work
- Maintaining a confidential recording platform and obtaining, managing, and transferring CP records within the stipulated 5-day transfer period for individual children and liaising with previous and receiving schools
- Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children. When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children, the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child, with the DSL liaising closely with the Designated Teacher.
- Ensuring the preparation of appropriate reports for and attendance at case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency meetings

- Arranging appropriate induction and continuing training for all staff, providing regular updates as necessary.
- Liaising with the Headteacher and DSG
- Lead and support a school culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings and supporting measures and plans put in place to support or protect them
- Ensuring that any educational or safeguarding assessments of children consider the wider **contextual environmental** factors present in the child's life outside the school or family and inform the development of support for learning, attendance, behaviour, and mental and emotional health
- Helping promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff
- Ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities
- Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with the recommendations within KCSiE 2022
- Liaising with the Headteacher to inform them of any safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult (PACE Code C 2019)

### Governance and Leadership

The Trust Board fully recognises its responsibilities regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection and for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as outlined in Part 2 of KCSiE, 2022. The Trust Board has the strategic responsibility to monitor and ensure that all Child Protection arrangements, procedures, policies, and training are in place and effective. Safeguarding will be an agenda item on every Local Governing Board meeting, and any relevant reports on the operation of safeguarding / child protection across the school are provided and considered.

Management and leadership by the Headteacher and Local Governing Board ensure that the time, resources, and training are adequate to ensure that the DSL responsibilities, as outlined in KCSiE, are carried out and that all strategic child protection and safeguarding arrangements are in place and effective.

The Trust Board and the Local Governing Board will ensure that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, so that all systems, processes, and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart and will facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding which involves everyone.

The Trust Board and Local Governing Board are aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements set out. The Senior Leadership Team will be supported to ensure that there are policies and procedures in place to make sure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

The Local Governing Board will:

- Designate a governor (DSG) for Child Protection & Safeguarding who will monitor the school's Child Protection Policy in operation along with training and procedures and keep the Governing Board suitably updated
- Ensure a written report is presented to each Local Governing Board meeting on the Child Protection/Safeguarding work of the school and that the previous school year annual report is presented to the Autumn Term meeting
- Ensure that this policy is revised and updated annually and in doing so will seek the views of parents and children and the views and experience of staff
- Remedy any identified weaknesses in the policy or application of the policy immediately

- Ensure all Local Governing Board governors complete The National College Safeguarding Training annually and complete online safety training at least every 3 years. The DSG should complete the advanced training every three years
- Make opportunities available for Governors to complete Safer Recruitment training
- The DSG acts as a 'Champion' for Child Protection and liaises with the Head & DSL to report to, update and advise the Local Governing Board on the strategic and operational aspects of safeguarding

Local Governing Board members have a duty to assure themselves that the school's Child Protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C of KCSiE 2022 but would not routinely have access to details of individual Child Protection Cases and understand the requirement for confidentiality.

### All Staff

It is recognised that staff play a key role in safeguarding as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. All staff in school understand that they have a professional, moral, and legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes a responsibility to be alert to the various child protection / safeguarding issues outlined in KCSiE, 2022 and associated indicators of, for example, abuse, neglect, exploitation, violent extremist radicalisation, sexual violence, and sexual harassment and to record and report concerns immediately to staff identified with child protection responsibilities within the school.

Staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as being abusive or harmful. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to a DSL if they have any concerns about a child.

In line with existing and relevant policies, for example, staff Code of Conduct and the Behaviour Policy, staff will determine how best to build trusted relationships with children, young people and parents/carers which facilitate appropriate professional communication.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection
- Know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, neglected, or exploited and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child
- Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
- Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help
- Understand the early help process and their role in it
- Understand the school safeguarding policies and systems
- Undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated
- Be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989
- Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality
- Reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- Act in line with Teachers' Standards 2012 which state that teachers (including Headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties

All staff have received training / briefing; had time allocated to read and the opportunity to seek advice or clarification; about the current legislation / guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 – Part 1 for those who work directly with children (Safeguarding information for all staff) and, or, annex A (a condensed version of part 1), for

members of staff who do not work directly with children (Safeguarding information for school and college staff)

- School Staff Code of Conduct 2022
- School Whistleblowing Guidance 2022
- School Behaviour & Attendance policies - and understand the safeguarding context of both
- The role and identity of the DSL, DDSL & DSG

All staff have access to the current:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022) full guidance
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2022-2023
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings February 2022

### Children and Young People

The Trust is committed to ensuring that children are aware of behaviour towards them that is not acceptable and how they can keep themselves safe. All children know that we have a senior member of staff with responsibility for child protection and know who this is. We inform children of whom they might talk to, both in and out of the school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm. Life lesson materials are used to help children learn how to keep safe. Information is made available to children, including NSPCC and Childline.

The Trust's arrangements for consulting with and listening to children are via form/class time, peer support and mentoring schemes, teaching and associate staff, Student Voice. We make the children aware of these arrangements via peer/class time, assemblies, posters, letters, lessons etc.

Through the commitment to, and maintenance of, a robust and effective safeguarding culture and procedures, every effort will be made to ensure that every child will:

- Feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings considered
- Confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Contribute to the development of safeguarding policies and practice
- Receive help from a trusted adult
- Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online

### Parents and Carers

At The Consortium Academy Trust, we believe that our Safeguarding and Child Protection work will be more effective if it is carried out in partnership with parents and carers and that preventative and supportive strategies such as the Early Help Plan and intervention by Early Help Support Services are a key source of potential support. This will be underpinned by open and honest communication and transparency in terms of purpose, always working in the best interests of the child.

However, we ensure that parents are aware that there may be certain circumstances when we need to progress concerns in relation to Child Protection, in line with local procedures.

Parents are also made aware that this policy is available from the school and is on the school website. The name and contact details (via school) of the DSG is publicised should parents wish to raise any suggestions or queries about the Policy or specific issues. Any such concerns will be considered when the policy is reviewed and responded to by the DSL, DSG or Headteacher.

The Consortium Academy Trust, will work with Parents/carers as part of the commitment to support effective safeguarding practice and seek support from parents/carers through:

- Understanding and adhering to the relevant The Consortium Academy Trust policies and procedures
- Identifying behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online
- Seeking help and support from the school or other agencies

- Their children about safeguarding issues and support the school in their safeguarding

#### **4 IDENTIFYING HARM**

School staff are particularly well placed to observe and should be alert to outward signs of abuse / neglect, various forms of exploitation and risk and any changes in behaviour or poor or irregular attendance.

When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022, outline the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect and all staff are made aware of this. Please also refer to Appendix A. The DSL and DSG ensure that all staff have received and been given the time to read KCSiE, 2022, Part One or Annex A and have access to the full guidance.

All staff are made aware of the possible indicators of abuse and neglect and how to respond to disclosures and other concerns.

Understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, is key to fashioning an appropriate response to concerns as early as possible and provide the support required to prevent escalation and a worsening situation. It is recognised that there are a wide range of potential safeguarding issues that school staff need to be aware. When assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm, there are 4 categories of abuse:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

Child specific issues will always be considered as it is recognised that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them. The DSL will liaise with appropriate colleagues (e.g. SENDCo).

Safeguarding incidents and/or concerns can be associated with factors and risks outside the home and education setting. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

Indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child and concerns may arise in many different contexts, from a variety of sources and can vary significantly in terms of nature and seriousness. Children develop and mature at different rates, as such it is necessary to locate concerns and behaviours on a continuum – i.e., what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is also important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused. The DSL will take seriously all concerns shared and explore them individually.

Technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues; children are at risk of abuse online from people they know (including other children) and from people they do not know; in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

Following a concern about a child's safety or welfare, the searching and screening of children and confiscation of any items, including any electronic devices, will be managed in line with the school

Behaviour Policy and/or 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' policy which is informed by the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' guidance (July 2022).

The DSL (or deputy) will be informed of any searching incidents (ideally in advance and thus can contribute to the decision making and any arrangements) where there were reasonable grounds to suspect a child was in possession of a prohibited item as listed in our Behaviour Policy. The DSL (or deputy) will then consider the circumstances of the child who has been searched to assess the incident against any potential wider safeguarding concerns. Staff will involve the DSL (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

## 5 TAKING ACTION

***"Never Do Nothing – Do the basic things well - It can happen here"***

***"If in doubt SHARE---this protects you, the school and the child"***

All staff have a responsibility to respond to disclosures by children or other concerns and pass these concerns on to the DSL immediately.

Staff do not need 'proof' of abuse and should not 'investigate' concerns.

This information must be recorded on CPOMS.

Concerns relating to marks or injuries must also be recorded on a 'Body Map' on CPOMS. If using a body map injuries or marks must be described, in addition to locating on the body map.

Photographs must not be taken of any marks or injuries.

Staff are briefed on procedures and regularly reminded to maintain an 'It could happen here' attitude and not to dismiss concerns or disclosures as insignificant, as they may provide a vital link to other information

Staff must not:

- Keep such concerns to themselves
- Investigate or seek proof
- Promise secrecy to children or adults making disclosures but reassure them that information will be shared appropriately and confidentially
- Ask closed questions that lead a child into a particular answer but if they need to clarify aspects of a disclosure by or about a child use only 'TED' type questions (i.e. Tell me – Explain - Describe)
- Delay recording or passing concerns to the DSL

Staff are made aware that it is unacceptable legally, professionally, and morally for any member of staff to keep such concerns to themselves, including concerns about the conduct of another member of staff) and that any such failures will be regarded as potential disciplinary matters.

Each case will be considered by the DSL who will decide what information to share with which staff and how to progress communication and information sharing with parent / carer and partner agencies.

The DSL will acknowledge receipt of any concerns and provide an update progress.

### 5.1 Action by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other senior person in their absence)

Following any information raising concern, the designated safeguarding lead will consider:

- Any urgent medical needs of the child
- Making an enquiry to the Central Database (formerly the Child Protection Register)
- Discussing the matter with other agencies involved with the family
- Consulting with appropriate persons e.g. Police, Children's Social Care etc
- The child's wishes
- Any suspicion of female genital mutilation of a girl under 18 years of age will be reported to the Police and Children's Social Care

Then decide:

- Wherever possible, to talk to parents/carers, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any Police investigation and/or place the member of staff or others at risk
- Whether to make a child protection referral to Children's Social Care or the Police because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm and if this needs to be undertaken immediately

OR

- Not to make a referral at this stage
- If further monitoring is necessary
- If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead should support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate and then ensure the case is kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving or is getting worse
- If it would be appropriate to undertake a Common Assessment and/or make a referral for other services.

Referrals should ideally be made by a designated safeguarding lead, however in their absence, anyone can make a referral, and their absence must not delay the appropriate action being taken. Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead the designated safeguarding lead should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented on CPOMS.

## **5.2 Action following a child protection referral**

The designated safeguarding lead or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Make regular contact with Children's Social Services
- Contribute to the strategy discussion and initial assessment
- Provide a report for, attend, and contribute to any subsequent Child Protection Conference
- If the child or children have a Child Protection Plan, contribute to the Child Protection Plan, and attend Core Group Meetings and Review Child Protection Conferences
- Share all reports with parents prior to the meetings
- Where in disagreement with a decision made e.g. not to apply Child Protection Procedures or not to convene a child Protection Conference, discuss this with the Education Safeguarding Manager
- Where a child is having a Child Protection Plan moves from a school or goes missing, immediately inform the key worker in Social Services.

## **5.3 Allegations against staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, and Contractors**

### Concerns that meet the 'Harm Threshold'

KCSiE, 2022, Paragraph 355, outlines the 'Harm Threshold':

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

In terms of the 'Harm Threshold', staff are aware that an allegation may be made in respect of behaviour that: may have harmed a child, involve a crime, is inappropriate behaviour towards a child either in their professional or private life or behaviour in their private life or the community not involving a child, but that may suggest that they could present a risk to children.



All staff have access to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 – Part Four: Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors
- Staff Code of Conduct 2022-2023
- Whistleblowing Policy 2022-2023
- Contact details for the LADO

All staff are made aware of their responsibilities and procedures to follow, in the strictest confidence. However, it must be appreciated that in the case of a whistleblowing situation, an investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the referrer might be required.

All staff are made aware that if they receive an allegation of inappropriate or abusive behaviour about a colleague, or feel required to make such an allegation, they should pass the information, without delay, to the Headteacher. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher the referrer should contact the Chair of Governors, a senior member of staff, DSL or the LADO immediately.

It is unacceptable for any member of staff not to refer such concerns.

The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors, a senior Member of staff) will on the same day, contact the LADO and follow the statutory guidance KCSiE, 2022, Part Four. The Headteacher (Chair of Governors) will also inform the Trust DSL or the HR Business Partner.

Following information sharing and a referral to the LADO, discussion will determine if the allegation / potential concern, meets the Harm Threshold. Those involved, will agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member.

All involved will attempt to ensure that any allegation is dealt with fairly, quickly, proportionately, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is subject to the allegation.

If the member of staff feels that that the actions taken are inappropriate, ineffective or that the situation of concern is continuing and they feel the situation is urgent, they should raise concerns and press for reconsideration or discussion.

#### **5.4 Low Level Concerns**

The Headteacher may also need to take action in response to 'low-level' concerns about staff.

Additional information regarding low-level concerns is contained in:

- Whistleblowing Guidance 2022-2023
- Low-level Concerns Policy 2022-2023 -this includes what a low-level concern is, the importance of sharing them and the confidential procedure to follow when sharing them.

Examples of such behaviour could include (KCSiE, 2022, Paragraph 425), but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating children

The Consortium Academy Trust has an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the our schools are dealt with promptly and appropriately; this enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about and act within appropriate professional boundaries, and in accordance with our ethos and values.

A 'Low-Level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant; a low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with expectations and the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the 'harm threshold' or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example, suspicion, complaints, or allegations made by a child, parent, or other adult within or outside of the organisation, or as a result of vetting checks.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded, and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false Low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially in line with the Low-Level Concerns policy.

Whether all low-level concerns are shared initially with the DSL or another nominated person, or with the Headteacher, is a matter for local arrangement.

If low-level concerns are reported to the DSL, the DSL should inform the Headteacher of all low-level concerns in a timely fashion according to the nature of each particular concern. Additionally, the Headteacher may wish to consult with the DSL and take a more collaborative decision-making approach.

The Headteacher is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns and if deemed appropriate, will share concerns and liaise with the LADO to clarify if the Harm Threshold has been met or if the matter can be dealt with as a low-level concern.

Low-level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be shared with their employers so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Where a pattern is identified, the school will implement appropriate action, for example consulting with the LADO enquiry line and following appropriate disciplinary procedures.

## **5.5 Safeguarding Culture and Whistleblowing**

The Consortium Academy Trust is committed to maintaining a safeguarding culture that is characterized by openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour, as set out in the Staff Code of Conduct 2022-2023 are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

At all times, the requirements of KCSiE 2022, Part Four, will be adhered to and all staff have access to this.

All staff are made aware and regularly reminded that they are in a Position of Trust and what the implications of that are and that any sexual 'relationship', consensual or otherwise with children up to 18 would constitute a criminal offence. Any such behaviour with children 18 or over would be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter.

If staff find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below

the expected professional standards, they are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer, if they have, this includes where concerns may be felt to be deliberately invented or malicious; such allegations are extremely rare and as such all concerns should be reported and recorded.

The leadership team will take all concerns or allegations received seriously and all staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime.

All members of staff are made aware of the Whistleblowing Policy 2022-2023 and the obligation to report concerns and that it is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.

All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking). Staff must adhere to relevant school/Trust policies.

If staff do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, they can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

The Consortium Academy Trust has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.

If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at a Consortium Academy Trust school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO, HR and Trust DSL.

## **5.6 Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm**

### **5.6.1 Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. Each school ensures that appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements including contact. The designated teacher for Looked After Children and Designated Safeguarding leads have details of the child's social worker, as well as the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care. They will work with the virtual head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of LAC and meet the needs in their PEP (Personal Education Plan)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

### **5.6.2 Children who Need a Social Worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)**

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health. Local authorities will share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead 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. This will be considered as a matter of routine. Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of

pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services). The school will also work with the Virtual Head to ensure that they are able to have oversight of the attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

### 5.6.3 Children Requiring Mental Health Support

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children. 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. The Trust has a mental health strategy in place to identify and work with children who may require mental health support. This includes staff training, curriculum development and both child and staff mental health ambassadors.

### 5.6.4 Care leavers

Local authorities have on-going responsibilities to the young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. That includes keeping in touch with them, preparing an assessment of their needs and appointing a personal adviser who develops a pathway plan with the young person. This plan describes how the local authority will support the care leaver to participate in education or training. Designated safeguarding leads will have details of the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver and will liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

### 5.6.5 Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face 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 disability without further exploration
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

To address these additional challenges, schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

## 5.7 Work Experience (Secondary Phase)

Each school has detailed procedures to safeguard children undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise children on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education. These are detailed within the school's Work Experience Policy.

## 5.8 Children staying with Host Families

Schools may plan for children to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances this may amount to Private Fostering and the school follows the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas children may reside with host families in the UK. These parents, and all in the home over 18 years of age, will be subject to a no cost enhanced DBS with barred list check.

## 5.9 Child on child Abuse

Child on child abuse can take many forms, such as:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence - includes rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault
- Sexual harassment - this can be defined as 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online or offline. Child on child sexual harassment is likely to; violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment
- Upskirting, which 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 cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) - is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or other or sends sexually explicit messages via mobiles, tablets, smartphones or any device that allows you to share media and messages
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) - is an umbrella term for behaviour that is inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent which is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. It can occur online and/or offline

Whilst we recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), **all** child on child abuse or harm will always be taken seriously and acted upon, under the appropriate policy e.g. safeguarding, behaviour, and not dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. These issues will be part of PSHE lessons and discussions. Victims will be supported through the school's pastoral system.

A dedicated NSPCC helpline is now available to support anyone who has experienced sexual abuse in an educational setting or has concerns about someone, the number is 0800 136 663.

We will:

- Deal with any reports or disclosures in line with this policy and refer to the DSL (or Deputy)
- Educate children about positive, responsible, and safe relationships and the unequivocal facts about consent, via PSHE, RSHE and the wider curriculum
- Educate children about the positive, responsible, and safe use of mobile technology and social media.
- Ensure that children know how to report if they witness or experience such abuse and understand that any form of child -on-child abuse is unacceptable
- Conduct a risk assessment to determine the specific risks to which the children at the school are, or may be, exposed, assessing, addressing, and monitoring those risks
- Never tolerate or normalise this behaviour and are very clear it is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"
- Challenge behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting skirts

We understand that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the school, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. Therefore, a whole school approach is important.

We recognise children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- The potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers
- Therefore, any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will involve liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and the SENCO

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans or questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ. Our schools will be a safe space for children to speak to, or share concerns, with staff.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

### 5.9.1 Appropriate Management

Any response should:

- Include a thorough investigation of the concern(s) or allegation(s), and the wider context in which it/they may have occurred: depending on the nature and seriousness of the alleged incident(s), it may be appropriate for the police and/or children's social care to carry out this investigation
- Treat all children involved as being at potential risk; while the alleged perpetrator may pose a significant risk of harm to other children, s/he may also have considerable unmet needs and be at risk of harm themselves

The school should ensure that a safeguarding response is in place for victims and the alleged perpetrator, and additional sanctioning work may be required for the latter. The school should consider:

- That the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the children involved and consider and address the effect of wider sociocultural contexts – such as the child's/ children's peer group (both in and outside the school); family; the school environment; their experience of crime and victimisation in the local community; and the child/children's online presence. Consider what changes may need to be made to these contexts to address the child/ children's needs and to mitigate risk
- The potential complexity of child-on-child abuse and of children's experiences, and consider the interplay between power, choice, and consent. While children may appear to be making choices, if those choices are limited, they are not consenting
- The views of the child/children affected. Unless it is considered unsafe to do so (for example, where a referral needs to be made immediately), the DSL should discuss the proposed action with the child/ children and their parents and obtain consent to any referral before it is made

Child-on-child abuse that involves sexual assault and sexual violence must always result in a multi-agency response. As well as supporting and protecting the victim, professionals need to consider whether the alleged perpetrator could be a victim of abuse too. Children who develop harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced abuse and neglect themselves. Children affected by sexual assault and sexual violence must receive the help they need. A typical response will involve:

- Children's social care
- The police
- Specialist services that support children who demonstrate harmful sexual behaviour
- The family
- Any other professionals who know or who have had contact with the child.

If the children are in the same class, the school should separate them whilst the concerns are being investigated. In situations of alleged rape and assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator must always be removed from the classes they share with the victim. The school should consider how best to keep the alleged perpetrator and victim apart while they are on the same premises, as well as on transport to

and from the school. Separation arrangements must be continued for as long as is necessary to make sure children are safe. This includes beyond the investigation even if it is inconclusive. Lack of conviction is not the same as the allegation being unfounded.

The school will always carry out a safety plan in respect of:

- any child who is alleged to have behaved in a way that is considered to be abusive or violent
- any child who has reportedly been abused or affected by the alleged abusive or violent behaviour by another child, or any child who may be at risk due to the alleged abusive or violent behaviour by another child as deemed appropriate by the DSL

Where it is alleged that a child has behaved in a way that is considered to be inappropriate or problematic (as opposed to abusive or violent), the DSL will use their professional judgment – based on the particular concern and/or allegation raised, and the needs and circumstances of the individual child/children in question – to determine whether it would be appropriate to contact children’s social care, and to carry out a safety plan.

Where other children have been identified as witnesses to alleged abuse or violence, consideration should also be given by the DSL to whether there might be any risks to those children, and whether a safety plan would be appropriate in relation to any risks presenting to them.

The school should consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any child/children involved. However, if there are police proceedings underway, or there could be, it is critical that the school works in partnership with the police and/or children’s social care.

Where a matter is not of interest to the police and/or children’s social care, the school may still need to consider what is the most appropriate action to take to ensure positive behaviour management. Disciplinary action may sometimes be appropriate, including to:

- Ensure that the child/children take(s) responsibility for and realise(s) the seriousness of their behaviour
- Demonstrate to the child/children and others that child-on-child abuse can never be tolerated; and
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of other children

## **5.10 Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force**

All staff are encouraged to use de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies that are specific to the child. Restraint will only be used as a last resort and all incidents of this are reviewed, recorded, and monitored. Reasonable force will be used in accordance with government guidance and the Trust’s Positive Handling Policy. Safeguarding and welfare concerns will be considered when restraint is used on SEND children.

## **5.11 Alternative Provision**

We will obtain written confirmation from any alternative provision that all relevant checks have been carried out as we would with our own staff. We will share any risk assessments and safeguarding issues where relevant and will regularly visit the provision and our children. We will ensure they have effective safeguarding in place and keep the DSL appropriately informed, this is further detailed in the Trust’s Alternative Provision Policy.

## **5.12 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, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (\*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.) The school will

notify the Local Authority if it becomes aware of such arrangements to allow the Local Authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

### **5.13 Domestic Abuse**

The definition of domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The school will work with the Police through Operation Encompass to provide emotional and practical help to children. Through this scheme the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day if they have been called to an incident of domestic violence. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can give support to be given to the child.

### **5.14 Elective Home Education**

Whilst many home educated children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience, we know 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. In line with the revised Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 we will inform their LA of all deletions from our admission register when a child is taken off roll.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will work with other professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this will be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child.