

**Trust Child Protection Policy**

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**Policy Statement**

Galileo Multi Academy Trust believes that the physical, emotional, social and intellectual

wellbeing of every child is paramount. All staff within the Trust have a duty of care to

ensure that children prosper in a safe, secure and welcoming environment in which their

individual needs are supported and met. The Trust recognises that all adults within each

school have a moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child.

Everyone has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt

action. All schools within the Trust follow the child protection procedures set out by the South Tees Statutory Safeguarding Partnership.

This policy is one of a series in the Trust’s integrated safeguarding portfolio:

* Complaints Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy
* Disciplinary Procedures
* Safer Recruitment Policy
* Allegations Against Staff Policy

This policy is available on the Trust website and is available in hard copy to parents on

request.

**Policy Principles**

* All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
* All adults are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.
* All adults have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
* All adults are equipped with the skills to identify children who may benefit from early help.
* Children and staff involved in child protection issues receive appropriate and timely support.
* The best interests of the child are always at the centre of decisions.
* This policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

**Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance**

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this

policy:

* Section 157 & 175 of the Education Act 2002
* The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
* The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge)

(Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018

* School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
* The Childcare Act 2006
* The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* The Equality Act 2010
* Working Together to Safeguarding Children July 2018
* Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019
* Guidance for Safer Working Practice May 2019
* Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
* Sexual Offences Act 2003
* Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
* What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused March 2015
* The Use of Reasonable Force July 2013

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

The Headteacher and the Trust’s Head of Safeguarding ensures that the DSL within each

school is a senior member of staff from the school leadership team. The DSL takes lead

responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and this role is explicitly mentioned in

their job description.

**The DSL:**

* has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post and is

given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice to other staff;

* is appropriately trained and the training is updated every two years;
* regularly updates their knowledge and skills by, for example, attending meetings with

other DSLs led by the Trust’s Head of Safeguarding and through attending relevant

training linked to specific areas of safeguarding (either provided by the Trust, South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) or other external providers);

* has undertaken Prevent awareness training and is able to offer advice and support to

staff on protecting children from radicalisation;

* is always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns;
* is a full time role. If the role is to be shared between more than one member of staff, this needs to be robustly risk assessed and the arrangements agreed with the Trust’s Head of Safeguarding;
* ensures adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities;
* acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community;
* has a working knowledge of Statutory Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) procedures;
* makes staff aware of STSCP training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding;
* keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored

securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil’s general file;

* refers cases of suspected abuse to children’s social care or police as appropriate;
* refers cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as

required;

* ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the

new school as soon as possible (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure

transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained using the file transfer form

* considers whether it would be appropriate to share any information with a new school in advance of the child leaving;
* attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences;
* coordinates the school’s contribution to child protection plans;
* develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the STSCP;
* meets termly with the Trust’s Head of Safeguarding to review cases and practice in school;
* ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated

annually, liaising with the Head of Safeguarding, nominated governor and headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) as appropriate;

* ensures the school’s child protection policies are known, understood and used

appropriately;

* makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school’s website or by other

means so parents are aware that referrals may be made and the school’s role in this.

**The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)**

The DDSL(s) are trained to the same standard as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL,

carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils.

In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the

functions above.

**Good Practice Guidelines and Staff Code of Conduct**

Good practice includes:

* treating all pupils with respect;
* setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately;
* involving pupils in decisions that affect them;
* encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils;
* being a good listener;
* being alert to changes in pupils’ behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and

exploitation;

* recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse;
* reading and understanding the school’s child protection policy, staff code of conduct and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues;
* being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils

lead to an increased risk of abuse;

* referring all concerns about a pupil’s safety and welfare to the DSL or, if necessary,

directly to the police or children’s social care.

**Abuse of Position of Trust**

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and

that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person

over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where

that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that

any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a

criminal offence. Each school’s staff code of conduct sets out their expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

**Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an

increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion,

communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can

occur. To ensure that all pupils receive equal protection, special consideration is given to

children who:

* are disabled or have specific additional needs;
* have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health

and care plan);

* are young carers;
* are affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health

needs;

* are asylum seekers;
* live away from home;
* are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
* live in temporary accommodation;
* live transient lifestyles;
* live in chaotic and unsupportive home situations;
* are vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity,

religion, disability or sexuality;

* are at risk of sexual exploitation;
* do not have English as a first language;
* are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM);
* are at risk of forced marriage;
* are at risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special

consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community

languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

**Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can face additional

safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in

this group of children, which 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 SEND being disproportionally impacted by behaviours

such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and

* communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff are trained to manage these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are

appropriately safeguarded and schools consider extra pastoral support for these children.

**Children Missing Education**

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from

education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual

exploitation. Schools monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including

notifying the Local Authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions

and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

All staff are aware that children going missing from education can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities such as mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation and risk of forced marriage.

Each school within the Trust holds more than one emergency contact number for each child

to give the school additional options for contact when a child missing education is also

identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

**Whistleblowing If You Have Concerns About a Colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly

placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the

situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague’s career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Trust’s whistleblowing policy (which can be found on each school’s website and the Trust website) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence, and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the

headteacher. Complaints about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of the Local Governing Committee or the Board of Trustees.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children’s social care or the police if they

believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

All members of staff receive a copy of the whistleblowing policy on induction and when it is

reviewed. This policy is discussed so staff are aware of the procedures in place if they have a

concern to raise.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels their

concerns are not being addressed, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800

028 0285.

**Allegations Against Staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed.

The full guidance for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children

Safe in Education (DfE, 2019) and the Allegations Against Staff Policy. Any such allegations will be dealt with by the Trust in accordance with its disciplinary procedure.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school or historical allegations will

be reported to the police.

Schools and the Trust will provide effective support for any employees facing an allegation

and will provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. Any allegation

will be dealt with as quickly as possible in a fair and consistent way that provides effective

protection for the child and the person who is the subject of the allegation. Consult the Trust Allegations Against Staff Policy.

All allegations against staff require the Trust’s Head of Safeguarding to be consulted. It may be necessary to seek advice, or make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer LADO, available on 01642 771531.

**Staff Training**

It is important that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training to

enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know

what to do if they have a concern. All staff, including the DSL and governors, receive

training that is regularly updated. This includes online safety training for staff. They receive

safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff

meetings throughout the year.

New staff and governors receive safeguarding and child protection training (which includes

online safety) at induction. They are provided with a copy of this policy, Keeping Children

Safe in Education Part 1 (DfE, 2019), the school’s behaviour policy and the school’s staff

code of conduct which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and

communications including the use of social media. Training at induction also includes the

role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies) and the school’s

safeguarding response to children who go missing from education. A record of induction should be kept.

**Safer Recruitment**

Each school complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE

2019) and the STSCP by carrying out the required checks and verifying applicants’ identity,

qualifications and work history. The Trust’s Safer Recruitment Policy and

procedures set out the process in full and can be found by contacting the Director of

Human Resources for the Trust via email: catherine@galileotrust.co.uk

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All relevant members of staff are made aware of their obligations to disclose relevant

information to the school that may lead to disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

and The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge)

(Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

This legislation is applicable to the following members of staff:

* All staff who work in early years’ provision including teachers, support staff and

volunteers;

* All staff who work in later years’ provision for children who have not attained the age of

8 providing childcare outside of school hours including breakfast clubs and after school

care;

* All staff who are directly concerned in the management of such childcare mentioned

above, such as the headteacher or other senior staff.

Each school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations

that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately

checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by each school or by the training provider, from

whom written confirmation will be obtained. Each school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

**Volunteers**

Volunteers, including governors, will undergo checks commensurate with their work in

school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no

circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised

or be allowed to work in regulated activity. Volunteers cannot provide personal care on a

one-off basis or teach or look after children on an unsupervised basis in school without an

enhanced DBS certificate (which should include barred list information).

**Contractors**

On arrival at a school, the school checks the identity of all contractors and their employees

working on site. The school also requests an enhanced DBS (including barred list

information) if the contractors are engaging in regulated activity or an enhanced DBS (not

including barred list information) if the contractors have the opportunity for regular contact

with children but the activity is not regulated. If no checks have been obtained for a

contractor, they will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.

**Site Security**

Visitors to each school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge,

which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or

collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the

school’s safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The headteacher will exercise

professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised

while on site.

**Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements**

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and

safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by

and managed by a school, the school’s child protection policy and procedures apply. If

other organisations provide services or activities on a school’s site on behalf of a school, the

school will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer

recruitment procedures.

When pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related

activities, checks are made to ensure effective child protection arrangements are in place.

When a school within the Trust allows children to gain work experience within the school,

the headteacher and DSL ensures the necessary policies and procedures are in place to

protect from harm both the children gaining work experience and the children within the

school. If a child over the age of 16 is gaining work experience, the school needs to consider

whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested.

Where a school within the Trust places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the

school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, and should be satisfied

that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. Schools obtain written confirmation from the

alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on

individuals working at the establishment (i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise

perform in respect of its own staff).

**Staff/Pupil Online Relationships**

Each school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict

rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils which can be found

in each school’s staff code of conduct. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be

subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

**Child Protection Procedures**

**Recognising Abuse**

To ensure that children are protected from harm, all staff understand what types of

behaviour constitute abuse and neglect and the indicators of this. Abuse and neglect are

forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm (for

example by hitting them) or by failing to act to prevent harm (for example by leaving a

small child home alone). Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other

children and young people. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2019) refers to four

categories of abuse. These are set out in Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

**Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very

serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying, should be reported and will be managed through each school’s tackling-bullying procedures which can be accessed via the school’s website.

**Taking Action**

Any child, in any family, in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff always

maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”. Key points for staff to remember for taking

action are:

* In an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child and, if necessary, call 999;
* Report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL;
* Do not start your own investigation, under **no** circumstances take photographs or record audio;
* Share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with

colleagues, friends or family;

* Complete a record of concern on CPOMS or your school’s recording system;
* Seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

**If You Are Concerned About a Pupil’s Welfare**

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil’s

behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or

poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these

circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK

or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the welfare concern form to record these early concerns and/or record on CPOMS depending on the system used in school. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

**If a Pupil Discloses to You**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel

ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will

happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been

told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is

happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff

member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they

must pass the information on to the DSL. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a

matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils, staff will:

* allow them to speak freely;
* remain calm and not overreact;
* give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to

help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’;

* not be afraid of silences;
* under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has

happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil’s mother think about it;

* at an appropriate time, tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff

must pass the information on and explain to whom and why;

* not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort;
* avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish

you had told me about this when it started’ may be interpreted by the child to mean

that they have done something wrong;

* tell the pupil what will happen next;
* report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves;
* complete the record of concern form or CPOMS entry and hand it to the DSL as soon as possible;
* seek support if they feel distressed.

**Notifying Parents**

Each school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This

must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a

concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Each school’s focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if a school believes

that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem,

advice will first be sought from children’s social care and/or the police before parents are

contacted.

**Confidentiality and Sharing Information**

All staff understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not

only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being

released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff only discuss concerns with the DSL, headteacher or chair of governors (depending on

who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the

information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon

concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) emphasises that any

member of staff can contact children’s social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the General Data

Protection Regulation (GDPR). Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The

information is:

* necessary and proportionate
* relevant
* adequate
* accurate
* timely
* secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil’s school file and the

school file will be ‘tagged’ to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive

information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do

so, the DSL may share information without consent, and will record the reason for not

obtaining consent.

If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection

records, they will refer the request to the data protection officer, DSL or Head of Safeguarding.

GDPR does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where

that information may help to protect a child.

**Referral to Children’s Social Care**

The DSL will make a referral to children’s social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering

or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding)

and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the

risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children’s social care if they genuinely

believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

**Reporting Directly to Child Protection Agencies**

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also

share information directly with children’s social care, the police or the NSPCC if:

* the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the

headteacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable;

* they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil’s safety;
* for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

For further details about timescales and protocols relating to referrals to social care, please see [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf) and Appendix 3.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm

caused by bullying and will use the school’s anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil’s behaviour warrants a response under child

protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

All staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can

take many forms, including:

* physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking, shaking, hair pulling or otherwise

causing harm;

* sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse such as inappropriate sexual language,

touching or sexual assault;

* sexting including pressuring another person to send a sexual image or video;
* teenage relationship abuse - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of

physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner;

* ‘upskirting’ taking a photograph, often without the knowledge of the victim, under a person’s clothes with the intention of viewing their buttocks or genitals (this is now a criminal offence)
* initiation/hazing - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team

or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating,

embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them;

* prejudiced behaviour - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel

powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging,

identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational

needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing

up’. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse, for

example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type

violence.

Each school takes the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse:

* The school is an open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share

information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them;

* Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour

and stressing the effects of bullying;

* RE and PSHE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current

affairs and other suitable activities;

* Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident

and at ease in school;

* Each school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

All allegations of peer on peer abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately. They will

then be investigated and dealt with as follows:

* Information gathering – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as

possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess

whether there was intent to cause harm.

* Decide on action – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant

harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care. The DSL will then work with

children’s social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the

police.

* Inform parents - as with other concerns of abuse, the school will normally seek to

discuss concerns about a pupil with parents. The focus is the safety and wellbeing of

the pupil and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to

the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social

care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

Safeguarding incidents or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and

can occur between children outside the school. All staff consider the context within which

incidents or behaviours occur (contextual safeguarding). Assessments of children consider

whether wider environmental factors are present in a child’s life that are a threat to their

safety and welfare. As much information as possible must be provided by the school if a

referral is being made.

**Supporting Those Involved**

The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on their circumstance

and the nature of the abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, the support of

family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or some restorative

justice work.

Support will also be required for the pupil that harmed. Schools will seek to understand why

the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil

and/or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

**Sexting**

There is no accepted definition of ‘sexting’ but most professionals agree that it refers to the

sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs

of a person under 18 years of age, via mobiles or over the internet. The UKCCIS advice

document refers to this as ‘youth produced sexual imagery’.

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to as follows:

* The incident will be reported to the DSL immediately and the DSL will hold an initial

review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent

interviews with the young people involved;

* Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is

good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of

harm;

* At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or

is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care and/or the police

immediately in accordance with this policy.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. For example, if

sexual images or videos have been posted online. Once a report is made to the police, the

report must be recorded and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices

and interviews with the young people involved.

If an incident involving ‘sexting’ comes to the attention of an adult, they should comply with

the following:

* Never view, download or share the imagery themselves, or ask a child to share or

download it-this is illegal;

* If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed

it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL;

* Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it;
* Do not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information

regarding the imagery as this is the responsibility of the DSL;

* Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young

person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers;

* Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved;
* Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive

support and help from the DSL.

**Sexual Violence and Harassment**

Schools have a calm, considered and appropriate response to reports of child on child sexual

violence and harassment that are underpinned by pre-planning and effective training. All

reports are responded to immediately and the starting point is always that sexual violence

and sexual harassment are not accepted and will not be tolerated. All children are listened

to and reassured with reports never being passed off as ‘banter’.

Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate risk and

needs assessment. If there is a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk and needs

assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Risk and needs assessments must

consider protection and support for the victim, the alleged perpetrator and all other children at the school. Risk assessments will be recorded and reviewed.

When a school has a report of sexual violence or sexual assault, they will either: manage the

report internally, seek support from early help, make a referral to children’s social care or

report the disclosure to the police. Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault

will always be passed to the police as a starting point.

Support and protection will be provided for the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other

children (e.g. witnesses) throughout the process and for as long as necessary, and schools

will seek advice from and work with children’s social care, the police and other agencies as

necessary. Victims may find it helpful to choose a designated trusted adult within school to

talk to about their needs. They may need to, at times, withdraw from lessons. This must be

the choice of the child and not because this makes managing the situation easier for the

school. In some circumstances, the victim may need to move schools or access alternative

provision as a result of the trauma suffered. Again, this should only be at the request of the

victim.

**Serious Violence**

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

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office’s [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence) and its [Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines).

**Sexual Exploitation of Children**

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group taking advantage of an imbalance of

power between them and a person under the age of 18 which results in sexual activity. The

victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual and

can include contact and non-contact sexual activity. The exploitation can involve physical

contact or contact through the use of technology. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or

a series of incidents over time and can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or

females, and children or adults.

Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the

offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation.

Each school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A

common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn’t recognise the coercive

nature of the relationship and doesn’t see themselves as a victim. The child may initially

resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as

they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are

reported immediately to the DSL.

**Honour-Based Violence**

‘Honour-based’ violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total

removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In the UK, the practice is a

criminal offence under the [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/31/contents). The practice can cause

intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in

childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult

women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are

carried out abroad and staff are particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by

female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

If a member of staff is concerned a child is at risk of FGM or suspects this, they will report

their concerns to the DSL who will contact children’s social care for further action to be

taken.

Section 5B of the [Female Genital Act 2003](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/31/section/5B) places a statutory duty upon teachers to

personally report to the police where they discover (either though disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. This should also be reported to the school’s DSL.

**Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent

to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological,

financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and

abuse. In England and Wales, the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social

Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which

is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging

the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the

prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in

England. School staff receive training and are particularly alert to suspicions or concerns

raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

**Radicalisation and Extremism**

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British

values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and

tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities

which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised

form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy

extremism.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are

provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture

and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of

SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/380595/SMSC\_Guidance\_Maintained\_Schools.pdf

The LSCB provides guidance and the local procedures for dealing with incidents of

radicalisation and extremism: http://www.teescpp.org.uk/prevent-channel-referral-process

Educate Against Hate, a website launched by Her Majesty’s Government, provides

information, support and resources for teachers, school leaders and parents:

https://educateagainsthate.com

**Online Safety**

All schools within the Trust teach children about safeguarding, including online safety, as

part of their broad and balanced curriculum. Each school has their own bespoke whole

school approach to online safety and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and

escalate any incident as appropriate. This approach also includes a clear policy on the use of

mobile technology. Relevant safeguarding issues may be covered during PSHE lessons and

Relationships Education and Sex Education.

Schools ensure that there are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. However,

they also ensure that ‘over-blocking’ does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what

children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding. Guidance is available to schools from the DfE [Teaching online safety in school](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools). This guidance outlines how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements.

**The Use of Reasonable Force**

Under some circumstances, staff may need to use reasonable force to safeguard children.

Reasonable means ‘using no more force than is needed’. The contact may be passive physical contact or active physical contact, and the decision whether or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff involved.

Schools include the circumstances in which force might be used in their behaviour policy or

in a separate reasonable force policy using advice from the DfE document: [The Use of](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools)

[Reasonable Force (July 2013).](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools) When using reasonable force in response to risks provided by

incidents involving children with SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, schools

recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. They make reasonable adjustments in

compliance with the [Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents) and plan positive and pro-active behaviour support

to reduce the occurrence of incidents.

**Private Fostering Arrangements**

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone (other than a parent, a close relative

or a person with parental responsibility) cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more,

with the agreement of the child’s parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged

under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons

involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children’s services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering

arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the Local

Authority of the circumstances so they can check the arrangement is suitable and safe.

Schools within the Trust do not allow children to stay with host families (also known as

homestay arrangements).

**Related Safeguarding Portfolio Policies**

This policy should be read alongside the school’s safeguarding policies and:

* Complaints Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy
* Disciplinary Procedures
* Safer Recruitment Policy
* Schools Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement
* Allegations Against Staff Policy

**Looked After Children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or

neglect. The Trust ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep

looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child’s looked after

legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer

by the authority looking after the child. Each school has a designated teacher who has

responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after as well as those who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child

arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.

The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of children’s social

workers and the name and contact details of the Local Authority’s virtual head for children

in care.

Previously looked after children potentially remain vulnerable and therefore all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep them safe.

The designated teacher works with the virtual school head to discuss how funding can be

best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs

identified in their personal education plans. The virtual school head for Redcar and

Cleveland is Harry Ainscough: Harry.Ainscough@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and is made available via the school website.

**Appendix One**

**Four Categories of Abuse**

**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is 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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or

deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen’s Syndrome by

Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

**Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe

and persistent 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 cyber bullying), 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.

**Sexual Abuse**

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.

**Neglect**

Neglect is 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 as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born,

neglect may involve a parent or 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 care-givers); or
* ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

**Indicators of abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones

resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been

inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may

go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their

abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they ‘tell’. It is also quite difficult for

anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any

degree of certainty. For these reasons, it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of

behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding

lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to

investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. It is important that staff do not undertake to take photographs or audio recordings of any disclosure or suspected abusive injury.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

* have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries;
* show signs of pain or discomfort;
* keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather;
* be concerned about changing for PE or swimming;
* look unkempt and uncared for;
* change their eating habits;
* have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships;
* appear fearful;
* be reckless with regard to their own or other’s safety;
* self-harm;
* frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day;
* show signs of not wanting to go home;
* display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn;
* challenge authority;
* become disinterested in their school work;
* be constantly tired or preoccupied;
* be wary of physical contact;
* be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol;
* display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age;
* acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new ‘friends’.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They

should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the

DSP to decide how to proceed.

**Appendix Two**

**Terminology**

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting

children from maltreatment and preventing the impairment of health or development,

ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and

effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been

identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of a school, full time or part time,

temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**DSL** refers to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at a school.

**Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

**Appendix Three**

**Flowchart adapted from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019**

Child’s Case is referred to LA Children’s Social Care

South Tees Multi Agency Children’s Hub

01642 130700 [southteesmach@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:southteesmach@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

Feedback to referrer on next course of action

No further SSP children’s social care involvement at this stage: other action may be necessary .g. onward referral to early help assessment/services

Social Worker acknowledges receipt of referral and decides on course of action within **one working day**

Provide help to child and family from universal and targeted services

Assessment required section 17 or section 47 of the Children Act 1989

Flowchart on assessment and Flowchart on strategy discussion

[See Pages 37 and 41 of WTSC 2018](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf)

**Concerns about child’s immediate safety**

**Decision by LA, Police or NSPCC**

[See Page 34 of WTSC 2018](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf)