Policy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy V2

Meadowhead Junior School governors have agreed to adopted Blackburn with Darwen Council Policies and procedures.

Approved by:	**Local Authority and School Governors**
Date approved:	**September 2026**
Date of next review:	**September 2027**

Safeguarding Contacts and Training Details

Role	Name	Details of training
Headteacher	**Mr J Newsham**	**DSL L3 Training** **Prevent** **Safer recruitment** **Safeguarding** **Online Safety** **IOSH – Managing safely**
Designated Safeguarding Lead	**Miss L Duckworth**	**DSL L3 Training** **Prevent** **Safer recruitment** **Safeguarding** **Online Safety**
Deputy Safeguarding Lead/s	**Ms R Blackledge** **Mrs H Lawton** **Mrs C Ramsbottom** **Mrs A Hartley**	**DSL L3 Training** **Prevent** **Safer recruitment** **Safeguarding** **Online Safety**
Safeguarding Governor	**Mr S Wolski**	**Email sent needs updating**
Chair of Governors	**Mr S Wolski**	**Email sent needs updating**

Lead Contacts

Role	Name
Prevent Lead	**Mr J Newsham**
Prevent Governor	**Mr S Wolski**
Operation Encompass Lead	**Mrs L Duckworth**

Blackburn with Darwen Key Contacts

Role	Contact number
LADO: Elissa Harper	01254 506915
Blackburn with Darwen Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	01254 666400
Blackburn with Darwen – Emergency Duty Team (EDT)	01254 587547 (out of office hours)
Blackburn with Darwen Prevent Education Officer	01254 585270

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1. Scope, Purpose and Aims

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every child who is a pupil at our school is safe and protected from harm.

1.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

1.3 This policy therefore applies to all school staff members including supply staff, trainee teachers and volunteers. and provides clear direction on how to safeguard children effectively.

1.4 Our school is committed to ensuring that children who are at risk of, or experiencing, significant harm or abuse receive appropriate support, and that swift and effective action is taken to protect them.

1.5 This policy aims to provide clear guidance to staff, governors and parents regarding the school's moral and statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

1.6 Our school fulfils its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children through prevention, early identification of need, appropriate support and effective intervention.

1.7 This policy, and associated policies, will be reviewed annually (as a minimum) and updated as required to ensure they remain up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learned.

1.8 This policy will be available on our school website, and paper copies can be provided upon request.

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this policy.

2.1 **Safeguarding** is defined as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

2.2 **Child Protection** is a key element of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It encompasses the activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

2.1 A **child** means any person under the age of 18 years.

2.2 **Staff** refers to all those working on behalf of our school, full-time or part-time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity, including supply staff, trainee teachers and volunteers.

2.3 **Parent/Carer** refers to birth parents and other adults who have a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers, adoptive parents and legal guardians.

2.3.1 **Governors** refers to individual governors, governing bodies and governing boards.

2.4 **Child-on-child abuse** refers to situations where children abuse other children. This behaviour can take many forms and may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory bullying;
- Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents;
- Physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- Upskirting;
- Abuse within intimate personal relationships between children;
- Consensual and non-consensual making of sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos;
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; and
- Initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals.

2.6 **Family Help** refers to the support available to children and families as soon as difficulties emerge at any stage of a child's life, from infancy through to adolescence. Family Help is provided through a continuum of support, including universal services, community-based early help, the targeted early help level of Family Help, and, where required, statutory services delivered under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

2.5 **Abuse** is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill-treatment that is not physical, as well as the impact of witnessing the ill-treatment of others. The indicators of abuse and neglect, as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, are set out in Appendix C.

2.6 **Children Absent from Education** refers to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods. Such absence may indicate safeguarding concerns, including neglect, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation. Absence, as well as going missing from education, can be a warning sign that a child is at risk and should be responded to appropriately.

2.7 **Children Missing Education (CME)** refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

3. Ethos and Culture of Safeguarding

3.1 Our school is committed to maintaining a strong safeguarding culture in which every child feels safe, valued, respected, listened to and supported.

3.2 We recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff; governors, volunteers and visitors have a role to play in protecting children from harm and promoting their wellbeing.

3.3 We foster an environment where pupils are encouraged and enabled to speak openly about any worries, concerns or difficulties. Children will be listened to, taken seriously and supported in a manner that is appropriate to their individual needs and circumstances.

3.4 We recognise that school staff are well placed to observe children on a daily basis, identify concerns at an early stage and take timely action to prevent concerns from escalating.

3.5 All staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned, exercise professional curiosity and act promptly on any concern, however small it may appear.

3.6 Our school promotes a clear set of values based on ambition, friendship, kindness, teamwork and respect. Our school moto is ‘High Aspirations and Bright Futures’ These values are reflected in all aspects of school life and underpin our safeguarding practice.

3.7 The school promotes an inclusive and anti-discriminatory culture where racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

3.8 We are committed to a whole-school approach to safeguarding that actively challenges and addresses inappropriate, harmful or discriminatory behaviour. We maintain a culture of zero tolerance towards sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, sexual violence, sexual harassment and child-on-child abuse.

3.9 Governors, proprietors and school leaders will ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective and that the welfare of children remains at the centre of all decision-making.

3.10 School leaders will create and maintain a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which staff feel confident to raise concerns, seek advice and discuss safeguarding matters, including concerns relating to colleagues, children or issues arising outside of school.

3.11 Leaders, governors, proprietors and all staff will model and reinforce the behaviours and expectations set out in the Behaviour Policy, ensuring that safeguarding remains a visible and embedded priority throughout the school.

3.12 The school maintains a clear zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. Such behaviours are never acceptable, will not be tolerated and will be addressed.

4. Curriculum

4.1 Children will be taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. Through our safeguarding curriculum, pupils will be taught how to:

- Recognise when they may be at risk of harm, abuse, exploitation or neglect;
- Identify healthy and unhealthy relationships;
- Understand consent, personal boundaries and respectful behaviour;
- Recognise and respond to child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- Stay safe online, including understanding cyberbullying, grooming, exploitation, misinformation, artificial intelligence (AI) related risks, image sharing and online conduct;
- Understand the risks associated with criminal exploitation, county lines, serious violence, extremism and radicalisation;
- Recognise the features of domestic abuse and coercive or controlling behaviour in an age-appropriate way;
- Develop resilience, self-esteem and strategies for managing their physical and mental wellbeing;
- Know how, when and from whom they can seek help, and how to report concerns safely.

4.2 Our curriculum will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who have experienced abuse, harm or trauma, and children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

4.3 All primary pupils will receive Relationships Education which includes explicit teaching about healthy and respectful relationships.

4.4 All pupils will receive Health Education which teaches them how to keep physically and mentally healthy.

4.5 This education will be fully inclusive and developed to be appropriate to pupils' age, stage of development and individual needs (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities).

4.6 When planning the curriculum, online safety should be considered as part of a whole school approach to keeping children safe online.

4.7 LGBTQAI+ inclusion is part of the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education and should therefore be included.

4.8 We actively promote the Fundamental British Values (FBV) of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs throughout our curriculum.

4.9 Safeguarding themes will be delivered through our curriculum offer which includes PSHE lessons, RSE, RE assemblies and enrichment learning such as NSPCC, Fire service and water safety workshops. Safeguarding education will be embedded across school life and delivered in a manner that is age-appropriate and responsive to emerging risks.

4.10 The effectiveness of the safeguarding curriculum will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects local safeguarding needs, emerging risks and the vulnerabilities of our children.

5. Safeguarding Induction and Training

5.1 All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. This will include training on:

- Child protection and safeguarding procedures
- Domestic abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviour
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Contextual safeguarding
- Online safety, including cyber security awareness and filtering and monitoring arrangements
- Serious violence
- Mental health and wellbeing as an indicator of potential safeguarding concerns
- The Prevent Duty and recognition of indicators of radicalisation
- Information sharing and information governance
- The management of low-level concerns

5.2 Induction will include:

- An explanation of the systems within the school which support safeguarding, including child protection reporting procedures and record keeping systems.
- This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The Behaviour Policy.
- The Online Safety Policy.
- The Attendance Policy and the school's safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods.

- The Whistleblowing Policy.
- The Managing Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns procedures.
- The identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and any Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs).
- The school's filtering and monitoring arrangements and staff responsibilities for online safety.

5.3 Governing bodies and proprietors, working with senior leadership teams and the DSL, will ensure that all staff — including those who do not work directly with children — read and understand at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

5.4 Copies of the policies listed above, together with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, will be readily available to all staff at all times.

5.5 Prevent awareness training will form part of staff induction. Staff will be directed to approved Prevent training and local authority resources – BwD MeLearning. Schools are encouraged to utilise face-to-face Prevent training delivered by the Blackburn with Darwen Prevent Team to ensure staff receive up-to-date local context, risks and safeguarding guidance.

5.6 All staff will receive Prevent awareness training in accordance with Home Office guidance and the school's Prevent Risk Assessment. Training will be refreshed at least every two years and sooner where local or national risks indicate this is necessary.

Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation | Prevent duty training

Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales

The Prevent duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities - GOV.UK

5.7 All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety training, which is updated at least annually. In addition, all staff will receive safeguarding updates, as required and at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Safeguarding updates are shared weekly at the beginnings of staff meeting and through the weekly communication sent out by the Headteacher. Safeguarding training takes place once per term with a specific focus. During support staff meetings, updates are also shared. Non urgent safeguarding updates can be shared via email and through the use of CPOMS. Leader also receive the headreaches bulleting from the local authority which includes safeguarding updates.

5.8 All governors, trustees and proprietors will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety and Prevent training. This training will equip them to provide effective strategic challenge and assurance regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and the school's whole-school safeguarding approach. Training will be regularly updated. This training will include an understanding of the school's online safety responsibilities, including filtering and monitoring systems and the governance oversight required to assure themselves of their effectiveness.

5.9 In addition, governors should also undertake any additional safeguarding training recommended by Blackburn with Darwen Governor Services.

5.10 All staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff will receive appropriate safer recruitment training. This training will, as a minimum, cover the content of Part Three of Keeping Children Safe in Education. At least one member of any interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training.

5.11 The DSL and any deputies will undertake training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, including understanding local safeguarding arrangements, conducting appropriate assessments, understanding information sharing requirements and promoting a child-centred safeguarding culture. This training will be updated at least every two years.

5.12 In addition to formal training, the DSL and any deputies will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep abreast of emerging safeguarding issues, statutory guidance, local procedures and developments within the school community.

5.13 The DSL and any deputies will undertake Prevent awareness training and maintain an up-to-date understanding of local and national risks relating to radicalisation and extremism.

5.14 The DSL and any deputies will receive training which enables them to understand and respond effectively to child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and to support a whole-school safeguarding approach to addressing such behaviours.

5.15 The school will maintain accurate records of safeguarding training undertaken by staff, governors and volunteers and will monitor compliance to ensure training remains current and effective.

5.16 All safeguarding training and updates will promote a culture of vigilance, ensuring that staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that anyone can be a victim of abuse. Staff will be encouraged to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' when considering safeguarding concerns and to act immediately if they have concerns about a child.

6. Staff Responsibilities

6.1 All staff should maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ when considering safeguarding concerns. Within a school setting, indicators of unmet need, abuse, neglect or exploitation may present through a child’s attendance, behaviour, presentation, wellbeing, relationships or academic progress, even where no direct or indirect disclosure has been made.

6.2 All staff will read and understand at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and demonstrate their understanding in their practice.

6.3 All staff will contribute to a safe environment in which children can learn.

6.4 All staff should be able to identify children who may benefit from Family Help, including universal services, community-based early help and targeted Family Help interventions. Staff should be aware of local Family Help arrangements and understand their role in supporting early identification and intervention.

6.5 All staff are expected to complete safeguarding induction.

6.6 All staff are expected to attend annual safeguarding training relevant to their role.

6.7 All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and understand that they may make a referral directly if necessary.

6.8 All staff should recognise that attendance is everyone's responsibility. Poor attendance, persistent absence and prolonged periods of absence can be indicators of safeguarding concerns, including neglect, exploitation, abuse and unmet needs. Staff should remain vigilant

to attendance concerns and report them in accordance with school procedures and safeguarding processes.

6.9 All staff should be aware of the process for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (Children in Need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

6.10 All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected.

6.11 Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

6.12 All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, believed, and that they will be supported and kept safe.

6.13 All staff should be 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 harmful.

6.14 All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

6.15 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse), including sexual violence, sexual harassment, bullying, online abuse and harmful sexual behaviour. Staff should challenge inappropriate behaviours and never dismiss abusive behaviour as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’.

6.16 All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide, and can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

6.17 Potential warning signs that a child may be struggling with their mental health include: significant changes in behaviour; ongoing difficulty sleeping; withdrawing from social situations; not wanting to do things they usually like; and physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves. Not every child showing these signs is at risk, but staff should share concerns with the DSL.

6.18 Staff should treat concerns relating to self-harm, suicidal ideation or acute mental health crisis as safeguarding concerns and report them immediately to the DSL. Emergency responses should be managed in accordance with Section 9.15 of this policy.

6.19 All staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL (or a deputy) without delay, as part of the school's approach to serious violence.

6.20 All staff should be aware of the factors that may increase a child's vulnerability to abuse, neglect or exploitation, including children with SEND, looked after children, previously looked after children, young carers, children with medical conditions, children who are LGBTQIA+, children experiencing disadvantage or adversity, and children who are missing or absent from education.

6.21 All staff should be aware of indicators that may signal a child is at risk of, or involved in, serious violence, including increased absence from school, changes in friendships or relationships, unexplained injuries, carrying weapons, involvement with gangs or county lines activity, or a decline in wellbeing.

6.22 All staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to promote the welfare of and safeguard looked after children and previously looked after children. Staff are expected to exercise professional curiosity when considering a child's lived experience and to respectfully explore and question information where safeguarding concerns may exist.

6.23 All staff and volunteers should raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy and safeguarding procedures.

6.24 All staff should understand that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside school, including online. Staff should remain vigilant to contextual safeguarding concerns.

6.25 All staff should understand their role in maintaining online safety, including complying with the school's acceptable use expectations and recognising safeguarding concerns that may arise through the use of technology, social media, online gaming and other digital platforms.

7. Governor Responsibilities

7.1 Governing bodies and proprietors must have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, ensuring policies, procedures and training in schools or colleges are effective and always comply with the law.

7.2 Governing bodies and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility for their school's or college's safeguarding arrangements.

7.3 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction and that this training is regularly updated.

7.4 Governing bodies and proprietors should review the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at least annually and ensure that governors receive regular safeguarding training and updates to enable them to fulfil their strategic safeguarding responsibilities.

7.5 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all staff who work directly with children, and those who do not work directly with children, read at least Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

7.6 Governing bodies and proprietors should be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the public sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

7.7 Governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting pupils with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

7.8 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

7.9 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of DSL.

7.10 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post.

7.11 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure robust arrangements are in place to provide safeguarding cover when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances,

ensuring safeguarding concerns continue to be received, monitored and acted upon without delay.

7.12 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

7.13 Governing bodies and proprietors recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies.

7.14 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, as part of their induction. This should include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems.

7.15 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

7.16 Governing bodies and proprietors must ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place and regularly review their effectiveness at least once every academic year, including checks that filtering works on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations.

7.17 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing their whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

7.18 Governing bodies and proprietors should take measures to safeguard children by protecting personal information and ensuring the school has appropriate cyber security systems in place, in line with the DfE Cyber Security Standards for Schools and Colleges and any subsequent national guidance.

7.19 When governing bodies and proprietors hire or rent out school or college facilities/ premises to organisations or individuals they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe and review the lettings policy as a result.

7.20 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems.

7.21 Governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies must appoint a designated teacher for looked after children.

7.22 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

7.23 Governing bodies and proprietors should provide strategic challenge and oversight of safeguarding arrangements, seeking assurance that safeguarding policies, procedures and practice are effective and support a strong safeguarding culture throughout the school.

7.24 Governing bodies and proprietors should receive regular safeguarding information and assurance reports to enable them to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.

8. DSL responsibilities

8.1 The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This is explicit in the DSL's job description.

8.2 The DSL will keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record keeping.

8.3 When a child leaves school, the DSL will transfer the child protection file to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer (or within the first 5 days of a new term).

8.4 The DSL liaises with the designated teacher, SENCO, attendance lead, pastoral colleagues, Mental Health Lead (Miss Blackledge), First Aiders, and other relevant staff to ensure that children who may be at greater risk of harm or vulnerability are effectively safeguarded.

8.5 The DSL will raise awareness of safeguarding throughout school by:

- Ensuring all staff read and understand this policy and at least part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Updating this policy at least annually
- Ensuring this policy is publicly available.
- Ensuring that parents are aware of the school's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection, including the duty to make referrals where abuse or neglect is suspected.
- Linking with DSL networks and the local authority to make sure staff are aware of any opportunities for training and increasing knowledge of local agencies available to support children and families.

8.6 The DSL will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties.

8.7 The DSL (and deputies) will liaise closely with other services such as local authority Children's Social Care and Family Help.

8.8 The DSL and deputies will undertake and maintain all training required by Keeping Children Safe in education and local safeguarding arrangements as detailed in Section 5 of this policy.

8.9 The DSL (and deputies) will consider whether children are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation in situations outside their families, including online, and will respond appropriately to contextual safeguarding concerns.

8.10 The DSL or deputy will always be available, during school hours to discuss safeguarding concerns.

8.11 To ensure continuity, the school has in place cover arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave, or other circumstances, so that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay.

8.12 The DSL (and deputies) will lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up a CAF as appropriate.

8.13 The DSL (and deputies) will take a leading role in responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and will liaise with children's social care, the police and other relevant agencies as appropriate. The DSL will be familiar with local procedures relating to child-on-child abuse and sexual violence.

8.14 Where there are concerns about a child carrying, using, or threatening with a weapon, the DSL (or deputy) will assess the risk to the individual pupil and to others in the school, take appropriate action, put in place a safety and support plan where needed, and consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

8.15 The DSL (or deputy) will be the school's key point of contact where a child or their parent raises a request relating to the child questioning their gender, including any request for support with social transition — see section 24 of this policy.

8.16 The DSL will work with those responsible for filtering and monitoring systems to ensure safeguarding concerns identified through technology are acted upon appropriately and that online safety remains an integral part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

9. Procedures & Referrals

9.1 In addition to general duties and responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, there are certain circumstances where a specific procedure is required.

9.2 **Child Protection**

Under section 47 (1) of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

9.3 If, at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to the police or the MASH immediately. Anybody can make a referral.

9.4 **Referral to Children's Social Care MASH BwD 01254 666400**

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Complete the Request for Service Form

9.5 A professional making a child protection referral under S47 must provide information that highlights what the child's unmet needs (underlying risk factors) are as well as high risk indicators that potentially identify the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

9.6 The school promotes a culture of professional curiosity and respectful challenge. Where staff disagree with a safeguarding decision or believe a child remains at risk of harm, they should raise their concerns with the DSL and follow local escalation procedures where appropriate. The welfare and best interests of the child will always remain the paramount consideration.

9.7 **Consent from Parents/carers**

The school will normally be open and transparent with parents/carers about safeguarding concerns and information sharing where it is safe and appropriate to do so. Consent will be sought where appropriate and lawful; however, consent is not required where information sharing is necessary and proportionate for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child.

Where the child is in the care of the local authority, the DSL should liaise with the Designated Teacher regarding relevant consents and contacts. In the event of any safeguarding concerns arising for children with an allocated social worker, the allocated social worker and/or team manager will be contacted in the first instance to share these concerns.

The DSL may seek advice from the MASH or other safeguarding professionals. Consent is not required to seek advice or to share information where doing so is necessary and proportionate for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child.

However, if the DSL believes that informing parents would increase the risk of harm to the child, put anyone else at risk, or cause an unjustifiable delay in making a referral, advice will be sought from Children's Social Care and/or the Police, as appropriate. Where concerns indicate that a criminal offence may have been committed, or where there is an immediate risk of harm, the Police will be contacted without delay.

In accordance with the Information Sharing Duty, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, the school will share information with

relevant safeguarding partners where it may help assess need, make a decision, provide support, identify risk, or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.

In summary

The school will normally:

- Be open and transparent with children and parents/carers about safeguarding concerns and information sharing where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Explain what information is being shared, with whom, and why the information is considered relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.
- Inform parents/carers when information is being shared or a referral is being made, unless doing so would place a child or another person at increased risk of harm or prejudice a safeguarding enquiry.

You do not need consent to:

- Share information with another agency where it may help assess need, make a decision, provide support, or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child.
- Make a referral to Children's Social Care, the MASH, Family Help, Early Help, or another safeguarding or welfare service where sharing is necessary and proportionate for safeguarding purposes.
- Consult with other safeguarding agencies where sharing information is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.
- Seek advice from the MASH or another safeguarding professional where information sharing is necessary and proportionate for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child.

You should not seek consent, nor delay sharing information, when:

- There is concern that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm, or where information sharing is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.
- Seeking consent may place the child, another person, or the referrer at increased risk of harm.
- Seeking consent may prejudice the prevention, detection or investigation of a crime, or compromise a safeguarding enquiry.
- Concerns relate to issues such as child sexual abuse, exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), radicalisation, domestic abuse, or other serious safeguarding concerns.

Wherever possible:

- Parents/carers and children should be informed about information sharing decisions and referrals, unless there is a safeguarding reason why this would be inappropriate or unsafe. Transparency does not mean that consent is required.

9.8 **Allegations**

All concerns or allegations against those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges in a paid or unpaid capacity (this includes, members of staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) should be reported to the headteacher, or, where the headteacher is the subject of

an allegation, the chair of governors or chair of the management committee and in an independent school it will be the proprietor.

9.9 Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquires in line with local procedures to establish the facts and to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

9.10 **Referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer**

The Headteacher and /or Chair of Governors must discuss allegations with the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO)

9.11 **Low-Level Concerns**

Concerns about conduct which do not meet the harm threshold must still be referred to the school headteacher in a timely manner. Low level concerns should be recorded in accordance with the School Low Level Concerns Policy.

9.12 **Referral to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)** must be made if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned. This is a legal duty and failure to refer when criteria are met is a criminal offence.

9.13 **FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty**

There is statutory duty upon teachers that they must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence of FGM, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Female Genital Mutilation

9.14 **Referral to Prevent and Channel Panel**

The DSL (or deputy) will consider a referral to Prevent when there are concerns about a child being radicalised.

Radicalisation, Terrorist and Extremist Ideology

9.15 Emergency mental health response: if a child is believed to be in danger due to a mental health crisis, staff must call 999 or take the child to A&E immediately. For urgent but non-emergency mental health support, staff can direct families to NHS 111 (online or by phone, selecting the mental health option).

10. Record Keeping

10.1 An important part of safeguarding is ensuring that detailed, accurate and secure written records of concerns and referrals are kept.

10.2 The record keeping system used in our school is: **CPOMS**

10.3 Staff will receive relevant information and training at induction and when required that enables them to use the school’s record keeping system effectively.

10.4 All safeguarding and child protection concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded on **CPOMS.**

10.5 Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Pupil voice where appropriate

10.6 Child Protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the data protection legislation, which means that children and parents/carers do not have an automatic right to access them.

10.7 If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent/carer to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Head Teacher or DSL.

10.8 Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office - GOV.UK and data protection laws (the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025).

10.9 The school recognises that the safeguarding of children and individuals at risk is a lawful basis for processing and sharing relevant personal information. Where appropriate, staff may share special category personal data without consent where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child and is in accordance with data protection legislation.

10.10 The school will respond to Subject Access Requests in accordance with data protection legislation. However, personal data relating to a pupil may be withheld where the serious harm test is met and disclosure would be likely to cause serious harm to the physical or mental health of the pupil or another individual.

10.11 If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should seek advice from the DSL.

10.12 The DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

10.13 Confirmation of receipt of the child protection file should be obtained and retained by the school the child has left.

11. Information Sharing

11.1 Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. Staff should ensure that information sharing is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure, and is undertaken in accordance with the Information Sharing Duty, data protection legislation, and local safeguarding procedures.

11.2 In accordance with the Information Sharing Duty and statutory safeguarding guidance, staff who hold information that may be relevant to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of a child must ensure that it is shared with the appropriate person or agency. Information should be shared as early as possible and staff should not wait until concerns reach a statutory threshold before taking action.

11.3 Early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already a child in need, a child with a protection plan or a looked after child.

11.4 Staff will not assume that a colleague, another professional, agency or organisation has already shared relevant information or will do so on their behalf. Each member of staff remains

personally responsible for ensuring that safeguarding information is passed on appropriately and without delay.

11.5 Staff will only discuss concerns with the DSL, Headteacher or chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will determine what information needs to be shared, with whom, and when, ensuring that information is shared on a lawful, proportionate and need-to-know basis.

11.6 Information shared should be relevant, necessary, accurate, proportionate, timely and secure. Staff should consider the child's circumstances holistically and share information that may assist another professional, agency or organisation in safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.

11.7 Where children leave school, the DSL will consider whether safeguarding, welfare or additional vulnerability information should be shared proactively with the receiving school or college to support continuity of safeguarding and promote the child's welfare.

11.8 It is recommended that education professionals read Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK It is aimed at staff, governors and trustees, and sets out how to: comply with data protection law; develop data policies; understand what staff and pupil data to keep; and prevent personal data breaches.

11.9 Data protection laws (the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025) do not prevent the sharing of information for the purpose of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.

11.10 Staff should be aware that concerns about data protection must not be used as a barrier to appropriate information sharing.

11.11 Where a serious harm test applies (for example, where a child is in a refuge or other emergency accommodation), the school must withhold pupil personal data in line with its obligations under data protection laws. Staff should seek advice from the DSL, and the school should seek independent legal advice where in doubt.

11.12 Where information is shared with another professional, agency, school or service, staff must ensure that a case note is added to **CPOMS for recording**

- what information was shared;
- with whom;
- when it was shared;
- the purpose of sharing;
- decisions made; and
- the rationale underpinning those decisions.

This will help maintain an accurate safeguarding record, provide a clear audit trail of decisions and actions taken, and demonstrate that information sharing decisions have been made appropriately and in the best interests of the child.

11.13 Where a decision is made not to share information that may be relevant to safeguarding or promoting a child's welfare, the reasons for that decision should be clearly recorded, together with any advice sought and any review arrangements.

12. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Whilst ALL children require safeguarding and protecting, some groups of children, are potentially at greater risk of harm than others.

12.1 Children with an allocated social worker

This may include children who have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs, are subject to a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan, Family Help arrangements, are looked after by the local authority, or have previously had social care involvement. Such children may face multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities that can affect their safety, wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, and educational outcomes. Such vulnerabilities may include:

- Experiences of abuse, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, mental ill health, or family breakdown
- Increased risk of becoming missing from education or experiencing poor attendance
- Social, emotional, or mental health difficulties
- Increased vulnerability to child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, serious violence, or child-on-child abuse
- Difficulties in forming trusting relationships and accessing support when required

The DSL will work closely with Children's Social Care, Family Help services, Virtual School colleagues where relevant, and other partner agencies to ensure that children with an allocated social worker receive appropriate support and protection. Staff will be aware of the child's circumstances and any safeguarding risks on a need-to-know basis and will maintain high aspirations whilst promoting attendance, engagement, wellbeing, and positive outcomes.

12.1 **Children absent or missing from education**

It is recognised that when children go missing from education, or are absent, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, this can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual and child criminal exploitation — particularly county lines.

When a child goes missing from education, local CME procedures will be followed to safeguard the child and help prevent the risk of them going missing in the future.

Further information, guidance and the local procedure for referring CME is available within the school attendance policy, or from the attendance officer/lead.

12.3 **Children who are absent for repeated or prolonged periods of time can be at risk of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Further information and guidance to improve attendance** can be found in Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK to support early intervention and prevent the child going missing in the future. The DSL will work closely with attendance leads to identify safeguarding concerns arising from persistent or severe absence.

12.4 **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

Home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe.

Leaders including DSL and deputies will familiarise themselves with DfE guidance Elective home education - GOV.UK

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the DSL will be informed and will endeavour to co-ordinate a meeting with the LA and other key professionals and parents/carers where possible.

This is particularly important when the child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable.

12.5 **Children requiring mental health support**

- Mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns and be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Staff should remain alert to indicators that a child may require mental health support and should report concerns to the DSL in line with Section 6 of this policy. Where a child presents with significant mental health concerns, the DSL will ensure appropriate support and referral pathways are considered in accordance with Section 9 of this policy.

12.6 **Children looked After and Children Previously looked After**

- We ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep children looked after, children previously looked after, and children living in kinship care arrangements safe, recognising that these children may experience additional vulnerabilities.
- We promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after by working with the local authority and appointing a designated teacher for these children. Where appropriate, we will work with families, Virtual School services and other agencies to promote positive educational and safeguarding outcomes for children living in kinship care arrangements.

12.7 **Children who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQAI+)**

We endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by children who are LGBTQAI+ and provide a safe space for them to speak and share their concerns with a member of staff. See section 24 of this policy for our approach to requests relating to social transition, which now sits directly within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

12.8 **Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**

We recognise that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Such barriers include:

- Assumptions that indicators or possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- Being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then reporting the content/ behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

The DSL will liaise closely with relevant staff, particularly the SENCO, where there are safeguarding concerns relating to a child with SEND.

12.9 **Serious violence:**

Children with disrupted education (for example those who have experienced suspensions, permanent exclusion, or time in alternative provision) or a history of offending are at higher risk of being involved in, or a victim of, serious violence. Staff will be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school), and DSLs will access support such as the Youth Endowment Fund's evidence-based guidance where appropriate.

12.10 **Young carers**

We recognise that young carers may face additional safeguarding challenges due to the caring responsibilities they undertake for a family member with a disability, physical or mental illness, substance misuse issue, or additional support need. These responsibilities can have a significant impact on a child's wellbeing, attendance, educational achievement, and ability to participate fully in school life. Such barriers may include:

- Increased risk of emotional distress, anxiety, social isolation, or poor mental health
- Difficulties with attendance, punctuality, concentration, or completing homework due to caring responsibilities
- Limited opportunities to participate in enrichment activities, friendships, or wider school experiences
- Experiencing inappropriate or excessive levels of responsibility for their age and development
- Reluctance to seek help or share concerns due to worries about the impact on their family

DSLs will ensure that young carers are identified where possible, offered appropriate support, and provided with access to universal services, community-based support, and Family Help interventions at the appropriate level of need. Staff should remain alert to indicators that a child may have caring responsibilities and report any concerns to the DSL.

12.11 **Children attending Alternative Provision**

The school retains safeguarding responsibility for pupils educated through alternative provision. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, the school will obtain or conduct written checks that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff, have effective policies and ensure clear communication procedures in place in view of attendance. The checks will be regularly updated and stored centrally.

12.12 **Children with Medical Conditions and Allergies**

We recognise that children with medical conditions, including those with allergies and at risk of anaphylaxis, may be more vulnerable and require additional support to ensure their safety, wellbeing, and full participation in school life. Staff should be aware that allergic reactions can be life-threatening and that effective identification, planning, communication, and response arrangements are essential. Such vulnerabilities may include:

- Increased risk of serious harm resulting from accidental exposure to allergens
- Anxiety, social isolation, or reduced participation in school activities due to concerns about managing their condition
- Reliance on Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs), medication, and appropriately trained staff to support their health needs
- Difficulties in communicating symptoms, triggers, or concerns, particularly for younger children or those with SEND

- Additional barriers to attendance, wellbeing, and learning if medical needs are not effectively identified and supported

The school will work closely with parents, healthcare professionals, and relevant agencies to ensure that children with medical conditions and allergies are appropriately supported. Where required, Individual Healthcare Plans will be in place and staff will receive appropriate training to recognise and respond to medical emergencies, including allergic reactions and anaphylaxis. DSLs will consider whether a child's medical condition or allergy places them at additional vulnerability and ensure that safeguarding and support arrangements are coordinated appropriately.

12.13 **Modern Slavery and Child Trafficking**

We recognise that some children may be at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, or criminal and sexual exploitation. Children may be trafficked or exploited both within and across local authority and national boundaries and may not always recognise themselves as victims. Such vulnerabilities may include:

- Being missing from home or education, or regularly going missing
- Having unexplained money, gifts, clothing, mobile phones or other items
- Signs of physical or emotional abuse, neglect, intimidation or coercion
- Associating with controlling individuals or groups
- Being involved in criminal activity, including county lines activity, begging, shoplifting or transporting drugs or money

Staff will be aware that victims of modern slavery and trafficking may be reluctant to disclose their experiences due to fear, intimidation, trauma, loyalty to perpetrators, or not recognising that they are being exploited. Any concerns will be reported immediately to the DSL, who will consider appropriate safeguarding action and referrals to Children's Social Care, the police, or other relevant agencies.

12.14 **Financial Exploitation**

We recognise that children and young people may be vulnerable to financial exploitation, both offline and online. Financial exploitation occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of a child for financial gain and may be linked to criminal exploitation, organised crime, online scams, coercion, or grooming. Such vulnerabilities may include:

- Being pressured to transfer money, goods, bank accounts or financial information to others
- Receiving unexplained money, gifts, vouchers or expensive items
- Being coerced into opening bank accounts or allowing others access to financial accounts
- Being targeted through online platforms, gaming environments, social media or fraudulent schemes
- Being exploited as part of wider criminal activity, including county lines or organised crime networks

Staff will remain alert to signs of financial exploitation and recognise that children may not understand that they are being exploited. Any concerns will be reported to the DSL, who will assess risk, work with relevant agencies, and ensure appropriate safeguarding support is provided.

12.15 **Child to parent / Care giver abuse**

Staff should be aware that some children may engage in abusive behaviour towards parents, carers or other family members. Concerns regarding child-to-parent or caregiver abuse should be considered within safeguarding processes and reported to the DSL.

12.16 We therefore consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

13. Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

13.1 All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously by all staff.

13.2 Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including online, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships (teenage relationship abuse)
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- Serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, including harmful sexual behaviour and misogyny/misandry, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos, including those created or altered using AI (‘deepfakes’ or ‘deep nudes’)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission

13.3 The school recognises that prejudice-based incidents, including racism, faith-based prejudice, antisemitism, Islamophobia, disability-related discrimination and other forms of discriminatory behaviour, may be indicators of vulnerability, abuse, exploitation, radicalisation or wider safeguarding concerns and will be responded to appropriately.

13.4 At this school we minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

- Developing and maintain respectful and trusting relationships with all children
- Developing and delivering a curriculum that educates children about safe and healthy relationships and behaviour
- Creating a culture with a zero-tolerance approach to abuse
- Never accepting harmful behaviour as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’ and never reinforcing harmful gender stereotypes.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviours between children in accordance with our behaviour and anti-bullying policies
- Being alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day, for example immediately after school

13.5 Children can confidently report any form of abuse, including abuse from peers by speaking with any adult in school or by other means such as a worry box.

13.6 Particular consideration will be given to how children with SEND are able to report concerns

13.7 We recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place, and all staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' with regards to child-on-child abuse.

13.8 All victims of child-on-child abuse will be reassured that they are being taken seriously.

13.9 All adults in school take concerns and allegations of child-on-child abuse seriously and will refer the concern to the DSL (or deputy) as soon as practically possible.

13.10 All staff will record the concern or allegations of child-on-child abuse using the school's record keeping system.

13.11 DSLs will provide the initial response to any allegations of child-on-child abuse by speaking with the victim/s and alleged perpetrator/s and make clear records of their conversations/ investigations.

13.12 When an allegation of sexual violence or harassment is made the DSL (or deputy), will consider the following:

- Informing parents or carers (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- A referral to local authority children's social care if a child is at risk of harm, in immediate danger, or has been harmed, and
- When a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police.

13.13 When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment.

13.14 When there has been a report of sexual harassment, the DSL will consider whether a risk assessment is required.

13.15 Risk assessments will be documented and kept under review.

13.16 The DSL (or deputy) should engage with local authority Children's Social Care and specialist services as required.

13.17 In cases involving the sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, including images that have been generated, altered or manipulated using artificial intelligence (AI), staff must not intentionally view, copy, print, save, store or forward such material unless there is no alternative and it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child. Any incident will be referred immediately to the DSL and managed in accordance with Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (updated March 2024) - GOV.UK

13.18 The DSL will liaise with relevant staff and agencies to assess the level of support required for victim/s, alleged perpetrator/s and any other children affected. This may include:

- Internal pastoral and wellbeing support.
- Access to universal services and community-based early help, and the targeted early help level of Family Help, including coordination of multi-agency support where appropriate.
- Referral to health, mental health, education welfare, youth support, or other specialist services as required.
- Referral to specialist services, including Local Authority Children's Social Care.

14 Online Safety and Mobile Phones

14.1 It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

14.2 We recognise that there are unique risks associated with online safety and the DSL or deputy have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to manage such risks.

14.3 Through our broad and balanced curriculum, children are taught about safeguarding, including in relation to online safety.

14.4 Online safety is a running and interrelated theme in our whole school approach to safeguarding, including training for staff.

14.5 The breadth of issues classified within online safety can be categorised into four areas of risk (the '4 Cs'):

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories,
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes,
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying, and
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk,

14.6 There are effective mechanisms in place to identify, intervene in, and escalate any online safety concerns, set out in our online safety policy.

- 14.7 School has an effective filtering monitoring system to identify online misuse. Reports are received by school and reviewed by the headteacher

14.8 The effectiveness of the school's filtering and monitoring systems will be reviewed at least once every academic year, by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring (Jason Newsham), with support from the DSL and IT support. This will include checks that filtering works on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record of these checks will be kept.

Plan technology for your school - GOV.UK

14.9 School will keep up to date with developments in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and refer to DfE support, including 'Generative artificial intelligence in education' and 'Generative AI: product safety expectations', to use generative AI safely, ensuring filtering and monitoring systems are applied to AI in education.

14.10 Staff should use generative AI tools responsibly and in accordance with the school's policies on safeguarding, data protection, confidentiality and acceptable use of technology. Staff must not input personal, sensitive or safeguarding information into AI platforms unless approved safeguards are in place. Any safeguarding concerns arising from the use of AI, including inaccurate, inappropriate or harmful content, should be reported to the DSL.

14.11 The school will take measures to protect personal information and ensure appropriate cyber security systems are in place, in line with the DfE's Cyber security standards for schools and colleges, as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Mobile Phone Policy

14.12 In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and DfE statutory guidance on mobile phones in schools, our school is a mobile phone-free environment by default; any exception to this is by exception only. Pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. Children who bring a phone to school leave these in class boxes in the school strong room in the main office, these are put away until end of day.

15. Domestic Abuse

15.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises and considers children as victims of Domestic Abuse, if they are witness to incidents whereby, they hear, see and experience domestic abuse and its effects and they are related to either the victim or the perpetrator of Domestic Abuse. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 enables children to be protected by law and be offered support as necessary.

15.2 Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members.

15.3 We recognise that experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and therefore offer appropriate support to children and families who experience domestic abuse supported by Operation Encompass.

15.4 Advice on supporting children experiencing domestic abuse is available via the Operation Encompass Helpline: 0204 513 9990

16. Operation Encompass / PSR

16.1 Operation Encompass is a police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which ensures that a child's school is informed by the police when there has been an incident of domestic abuse to which the child or young person has been exposed.

16.2 School will also receive Police Safeguarding reports (PSRs) following police attendance at any incident of a safeguarding nature involving family where children are present. These are detailed accounts which should **only** be shared in their entirety with DSLs.

16.3 When an Operation Encompass notification is received by school it is transferred onto school's recording system with actions linked to the notification.

16.4 Upon Receipt of a PSR, this should **not** be copied in its entirety onto the child's record. However, a summary of the information and any actions taken can be recorded on the child's file, for example 'PSR received regarding an assault in the property - child X witnessed'.

16.5 The DSL/ Key Adult will conduct an individual assessment of the child's needs and decide on any school routine modifications that need to be made.

16.6 If there are additional concerns around the child's safety and wellbeing due to being aware of previously unknown information, a referral to the MASH will be made.

16.7 For more information on Operation Encompass, please visit: Home : Operation Encompass

17. Honour Based Abuse

17.1 Honour Based Abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents of crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and /or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

So Called 'Honour-Based' Abuse

Female Genital Mutilation

18. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

18.1 CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity either in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

18.2 CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity.

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.' Working together to safeguard children 2026, page 160

Child Sexual Exploitation

'Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.' Working together to safeguard children 2026, page 159

Child Criminal Exploitation

19. Neglect

19.1 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 and development.

19.2 Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion for home or abandonment); protect 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.

20. Prevent Duty

20.1 There is clear guidance for schools and childcare providers on 'preventing' children and young people from being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - GOV.UK

20.2 Localised support including assemblies and workshops for children are provided by the Local Prevent Education Officers and the Community Safety Team.

20.3 A Prevent risk assessment and associated documents are used in school, with support for the Prevent Team as required, to assess and manage risks relating to radicalisation. It is also advised that schools should have a prevent policy.

21. Safer Recruitment

21.1 The school has robust recruitment procedures which deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for, or securing, employment or volunteering opportunities within the school.

21.2 The school demonstrates its commitment to safeguarding throughout all stages of the recruitment process, including:

- Advert
- Application form
- Shortlisting
- Checking employment history and references, including appropriate online searches for shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence
- Interview and selection

21.3 Appropriate pre-employment vetting and checks will be undertaken to help identify whether a person may be unsuitable to work with children or is legally prohibited.

21.4 All offers of appointment are conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. These are:

- Verification of a candidate's identity
- An enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children)
- When using the DBS update service, the original physical DBS certificate will be checked
- Verification of the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals.
- A prohibition from Teaching check
- Checks on people who lived or worked outside the UK
- A check of professional or essential qualifications
- Checks to ensure that individuals employed to work in reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, are not disqualified under 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations.
- A check to see if a section 128 direction has been issued for an individual participating in the management of the school (if an independent school, including academies and free school) or holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school.

21.5 Where the school is also subject to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, individuals (including volunteers) must not be permitted to begin working in settings covered by the EYFS framework until the school has received the applicant's enhanced DBS certificate, including children's barred list information where required.

21.5 The school maintains a single central record (SCR) of all required pre-appointment checks.

21.6 The single central record includes all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff, even if they work for one day. Trainee teachers are subject to the

same safer recruitment checks as other staff, appropriate to their role and level of contact with children.

21.7 For independent schools, the single central record must also include all members of the proprietor body. In the case of academies and free schools, this means the members and trustees of the academy trust.

21.8 The single central record indicates when pre-employment checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed, or certificate obtained.

21.9 Written notification is obtained from any agency, or third-party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school or college that the school or college would otherwise perform, including supply staff.

21.10 This written notification confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business.

21.11 The date this confirmation was received and whether details of any enhanced DBS certificate have been provided in respect of the member of staff is included on the single central record.

21.12 Where the agency or organisation has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate which has disclosed any matter or information, a copy of the certificate is obtained from the agency.

21.13 The details of an individual are removed from the single central record once they no longer work at school.

21.14 School do not keep copies of DBS certificates.

21.15 A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications are kept in an individual's personnel file.

21.16 The school ensures that any contractor, or employee of a contractor, who is to work at the school, has been subject to the appropriate level of safeguarding and DBS checks.

21.17 The identity of contractors is checked on arrival at the school.

21.18 When applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by the school, we ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. This includes an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information when trainee teachers are engaging in regulated activity relating to children.

21.19 Visitors attending the school in a professional capacity will be subject to appropriate identity verification and safeguarding arrangements. Where visitors undertake work that constitutes regulated activity, the school will seek written assurance that all required safer recruitment and DBS checks have been completed. Photographic identification will be checked upon arrival at the school.

21.20 Where such assurances cannot be obtained, the school will verify the DBS certificate and corresponding photographic identification before permitting access to children.

21.21 The school has effective procedures for the recruitment, induction and management of volunteers. From 1 September 2026, volunteers who teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children on more than three days within a 30-day period, or who undertake overnight activities with children, will be treated as engaging in regulated activity, regardless of whether they are supervised. Such volunteers will be required to obtain an enhanced DBS check, including children's barred list information, before commencing regulated activity.

21.22 The school recognises that, from 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption no longer applies when determining regulated activity with children. Volunteer roles will therefore be

reviewed regularly to ensure that appropriate DBS and barred list checks are undertaken in accordance with statutory guidance.

21.23 Risk assessments will be undertaken for all volunteers. The level of supervision, frequency of contact with children, nature of activities undertaken and regulated activity status will be considered as part of the assessment process.

21.24 The school will maintain oversight of all volunteer activity to ensure compliance with safeguarding and safer recruitment requirements. A record will be kept of volunteers, their DBS status, regulated activity status and supervision arrangements where applicable.

21.25 Where volunteers undertake activities across multiple settings or organisations, the school may seek additional information where necessary to determine whether the role undertaken within the school constitutes regulated activity.

21.26 It is a criminal offence for a barred person to engage in regulated activity with children, or for an organisation knowingly to allow a barred person to do so. The school will therefore ensure that appropriate checks are undertaken before any volunteer undertakes regulated activity.

21.27 All governors have an appropriate level of DBS check.

21.28 In accordance with Blackburn with Darwen Council local policy, DBS checks will be renewed every three years.

Where concerns arise before the next scheduled renewal, or where an individual's role or employment circumstances change, a new DBS check may be undertaken where:

- An individual working at the school moves from a post that was not regulated activity with children into work which is regulated activity with children.
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more, or
- There are concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children.

21.29 Governing bodies and proprietors will ensure that safer recruitment procedures and associated risk assessments are reviewed annually to reflect changes in legislation and statutory guidance, including developments relating to regulated activity, DBS requirements and barring arrangements.

22. Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff

22.1 **An allegation that may meet the harm threshold** refers to anyone working in the school, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors that has:

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

22.2 When any such allegation is made BwD SCP procedures will be followed Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

22.3 **A concern or allegation that does not meet the harm threshold (low-level concern)** refers to anyone working in the school, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors that have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with 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.

22.4 All staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour, in themselves and others.

22.5 All staff will report any low-level safeguarding concerns to the DSL. Any low-level safeguarding concerns or allegations relating to the Headteacher must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will consult with and contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay and ensure that appropriate procedures are followed.

22.6 Unprofessional behaviour is challenged, and support is given to the individual to correct it at an early stage.

22.7 Low-level concerns are managed sensitively and proportionately.

22.8 Low-level concerns can help identify any weakness in the school or college's safeguarding system.

22.9 Employers of supply staff, trainee teachers and contractors will be notified of any low-level concerns relating to their employees.

22.10 If there is any doubt as to whether a reported low-level concern meets the harm threshold, advice will be sought from the LADO.

22.11 Where an allegation or concern relates to an organisation or individual using the school's premises for non-school activities, the Headteacher will follow the same reporting principles set out above and liaise with the LADO as appropriate; the governing body remains responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place when premises are hired or let.

23. School Premises: Toilets, Changing Rooms and Overnight Accommodation

The school will ensure that toilet facilities, changing accommodation and overnight arrangements are managed in a way that promotes safeguarding, privacy, dignity and wellbeing for all pupils, whilst complying with relevant legal and statutory requirements.

23.1 Schools must not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. This includes where the school is responding to a request to support any degree of social transition for a child who is questioning their gender.

23.2 Schools must provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over (apart from where individual, lockable toilets are provided for use by one pupil at a time).

23.3 Where a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether it can provide an alternative facility (for example a self-contained individual toilet) without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities, or the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other children.

23.4 Where the school provides mixed-sex toilets in addition to single-sex toilets, it will assess safeguarding risks and plan accordingly - for example, mixed-sex toilets should be in individual, lockable rooms that open directly onto public areas such as a corridor.

23.5 Schools must not allow a child aged 11 or older at the start of the school year to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. Changing accommodation and showers must be suitable for the pupils they are provided for, having regard to age, numbers, sex and any special

requirements. When responding to a request to support social transition, a school must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex.

23.6 Where a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms or showers designated for their sex, the school will consider whether it can provide an alternative changing or washing facility (for example a fully enclosed room for use by one child at a time, or access at an alternative time) without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities, or the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other children.

23.7 The school will keep a clear record of any alternative toilet or changing arrangements made under this section, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

23.8 Overnight accommodation on school trips and residentials will remain single-sex, in line with our safeguarding obligations.

24. Children Who Are Questioning Their Gender and Social Transition Requests

Our school recognises that children who are questioning their gender may have a range of experiences, needs and vulnerabilities. Any concerns, requests or discussions relating to a child questioning their gender will be considered sensitively, individually and with the child's welfare, safety and best interests at the centre of decision-making.

24.1 Schools should be appropriately professionally curious about a child's experiences and their potential vulnerabilities when a child or their parent raises a request relating to the child questioning their gender. Staff should avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes while maintaining the flexibility to respond to each child's individual circumstances.

24.2 Our school will not initiate social transition. This section applies only where a child or their parent raises a request. Social transition may involve changes to a pupil's name, pronouns, uniform or appearance. Such requests will be treated as rare and will be approached with caution and sensitivity.

24.3 Our school has an internal process for responding to requests relating to social transition, which includes consideration of any safeguarding risks and early referral to the DSL. Decisions, and the reasons for them, will be recorded to help the school manage matters fairly and consistently.

24.4 Parents will normally be involved in discussions where a child is questioning their gender, unless doing so could place the child at risk of harm. In those circumstances the DSL will be involved, and any decision to exclude parents from these discussions will be supported by clear reasoning based on specific safeguarding concerns, given that the threshold for excluding parents is high.

24.5 This section should be read alongside the School Premises section of this policy (toilets and changing rooms) and alongside the school's Equality and SEND policies, and with reference to the sport section below where relevant.

25. Sport

Our school recognises the importance of ensuring that physical education and sporting activities are delivered in a manner that promotes safety, fairness, inclusion and participation for all pupils, whilst complying with statutory requirements and the Equality Act 2010.

25.1 As children get older, some sports are typically taught and played in single-sex groups. The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception in relation to single-sex sport, which applies to participation in any sport, game, or competitive activity where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average

boy (or vice versa). This means our school can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances without discriminating unlawfully.

25.2 Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety; where this is the case, there will be no exceptions. In other cases, our school may adopt a policy of single-sex sport for reasons related to fairness.

25.3 Where there are no safety concerns and a child makes a request relating to how they participate in sport or PE, our school will consider the request in light of DfE guidance on supporting requests for social transition, taking into account the best interests of the child, the impact on other children, and the aim of creating a safe and fair environment for all children to participate in PE.

Appendices

A. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children's and Wellbeing Schools Act 2026
- Crime and Policing Act 2026
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use Access) Act 2025
- Victims and Prisoners Act 2024
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022
- Human Rights Act 1998

Statutory and non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2026) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- DfE (2026) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2013) 'Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage'
- Home Office (2022) 'Domestic Abuse guidance'
- DfE (2023) 'The Prevent Duty Guidance'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2026) 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'
- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2026) 'Information sharing to safeguard children and young people'
- DfE (2024) 'Academy Trust governance'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2024) 'Behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- NPCC 'When to Call the Police'
- DfE (2026) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2026) 'Allergy safety in schools'
- DfE 'Regulated activity: removal of the supervision exemption'
- DfE 'Mobile phones in schools' guidance
- DfE 'Cyber security standards for schools and colleges'

- DfE 'Generative artificial intelligence in education' and 'Generative AI: product safety expectations'

B. Associated and related policies

Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

SEND Policy

Behaviour policy

Acceptable Use of IT/ Social Media Policy

Complaints Policy

Mobile Phone Policy

Online Safety Policy

Attendance Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Suspension and Permanent exclusion policy

Medical/Allergy Policy

C. Indicators of abuse and neglect

Indicators of abuse as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, paragraph 24:

"24. Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

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

26. Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

27. Sexual abuse: involves forcing, causing or inciting a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over of clothing. Sexual abuse 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. Sexual abuse can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

28. Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, 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 caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs."