



Nook Lane Junior School
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
September 2023

Section 1- Our school ethos, policy and principles

- Nook Lane is an inclusive school, where everyone is valued, supported and respected.
- We recognise and understand that safeguarding is everyone's business and we adopt a mindset that 'it could happen here'.
- We promote a listening culture, where everyone feels supported, nurtured and understood, where children and adults can develop and maintain high levels of confidence and positive self-esteem.
- We foster a warm and welcoming environment where every member of our school community is treated equally but also supported individually irrespective of their age, gender, (including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, social background, ethnic origin/race, disability, religion or belief, supporting them to develop and progress emotionally, intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually.
- We provide a creative and stimulating learning environment. Where children are inspired, supported and challenged, respecting and supporting their individual needs.
- We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and additional extra-curricular activities and clubs.
- We encourage our children to be independent and curious learners, supportive and empathetic citizens and to hold inclusion at the centre of their learning.
- We invite our families and local community into the life of our school and value this close partnership.

Contact information and details

- Designated Safeguarding Lead is Diane Wilkinson (0114 234 1097).
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Steve Arbon-Davis (0114 234 1097)
- Appointed teacher for children who are looked after/virtual school is Steve Arbon-Davis (0114 234 1097)

Chair of Governors is Diane Shaw (0114 234 1097)

- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator/Inclusion Manager is Diane Wilkinson (0114 234 1097)
- Online Safety Lead/Co-ordinator – John Thornton (0114 2341097)
- Designated Link Governor for Safeguarding is Diane Shaw (0114 234 1097)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Prevent is Andrew Adedoyin (0114 2734850 option 1) or 07889737078
- Police emergencies – 101
- NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000)
- Childline (0800 11 11)
- CEOP (0370496 7622)
- Sheffield Safeguarding Hub to report any concerns about a child (0114 273 4855)

How we keep our children and families safe at Nook Lane

In class	Around school
<p>Zones of Regulation Circle Time SEAL sessions RSHE lessons Online Safety lessons Daily scaling of feelings Reflection time Thinking boxes Mindful minutes Turnaround tables/chairs Social stories Time to talk Peer buddies One Page Profiles</p>	<p>Emotionally available adults for every child Team around a child Named lunch supervisors Child led assemblies Themed assemblies Red and green thought focus Stand up for Mondays FRIENDs groups Interventions for social, emotional wellbeing. Coffee mornings for families Online Safety information for parents/carers and children. Emotional wellbeing information sessions for parents. Consultations with external agencies – autism team, educational psychologist, learning support, speech and language, MAST. Anti-Bullying Week Childline Circle of Friends Playground Ambassadors After School Club & Breakfast Club Staff briefings/PDMs Group meetings – Teaching Assistants, Lunch supervisors. Attendance meetings. Pastoral Support Plans SEND review meetings. School Council and Curriculum Councils.</p>
In the community	
<p>Crucial Crew Bikeability Travel plans NSPCC information Sheffield Parent Carer Forum Sharing links with external supporting groups and charities. Visits and residentials – risk assessments. Links with Stannington Infant School for transition. Links with Bradfield School and Forge Valley School for transition to Year 7. Links with CAMHs and Ryegate.</p>	

Our responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy is for our whole school community and is consistent with the procedures of the safeguarding partners – CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group), the Police and the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Information sharing, in line with the data protection act and GDPR, across our safeguarding partners, is key to the effective and successful implementation of this policy.

Nook Lane recognises its responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding and this over- arching policy sets out to explain how we will deliver these responsibilities. Our policy is underpinned and written in reference to the following guidance:

- Keeping Children safe in Education 2023, the statutory guidance for schools and colleges.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (September 2021) produced by the Department for Education.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2019, updated December 202) which is statutory guidance to be followed by those supporting children.
- What to do if worried a child is being abused (March 2015)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)
- Prevent Duty, advice for schools and child care providers (June 2015)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- Section 175 of the 2002 Education Act
- Ofsted Safeguarding Advice (September 2020)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) – Serious Crime Act (2015)
- UK General Data protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of charge) (Extended Entitlement) amendment regulations (2018)
- Voyeurism (offences) Act (2019)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- 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
- DfE (2018) Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE (2015) The Prevent Duty
- DfE (2018) Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

We will follow the policies and procedures set out by the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP). Paper copies of these are available on request at the school office and can also be accessed via a link on the school website on the Safeguarding page.

We carry out an annual audit of our safeguarding provision, which is a requirement of the Education Act 2002 and 2006, a copy of which is shared with SSCP.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Diane Wilkinson. In the absence of the DSL, child protection and safeguarding matters will be dealt with by Steve Arbon-Davis, the Deputy DSL. The DSL and DDSL will complete training every year and will attend refresher training in the interim period.

Our principles

Safeguarding arrangements at Nook Lane are underpinned by these key principles:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: anyone who has contact with a child or young person including governors and volunteers should play their part in keeping children safe.
- We use national, local and school child protection procedures to protect children, by identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- We aim to work in partnership and have an important role in multi- agency safeguarding arrangements as set out by Working Together 2018 (updated September 2020).
- Whoever has contact with a child at Nook Lane, has a clear understanding regarding abuse and neglect in all forms and understands how to identify, respond and report it. This also includes knowledge in the process for allegations against professionals.
- Staff, governors and volunteers, should feel confident that they can report any safeguarding concerns to the school and that these will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- A child centred approach, a clear understanding of the needs, wishes, views and voices of children. At Nook Lane we encourage pupil voice in a variety of ways, including; Curriculum Councils, including an Emotional Well-Being Council, School Council, Pupil Questionnaires, circle time, RSHE lessons and pupil led assemblies.
- Positive and informative working relationships with families. We share information regarding how we keep children safe at Nook Lane via our school website, information shared on SQUID regarding RSHE lessons and overviews, Online Safety evenings and weekly safeguarding bulletins from National Online Safety 'Wake Up Wednesday'. We share our safeguarding & Child protection Policy with parents, along with our Online Safety Policy to ensure parents/families have a good understanding of the safeguarding approach of the school. Our settings contact details are shared online on the school website and in the school reception area.

Our policy

Main elements:

Types of abuse – the types of abuse that are covered by the policy

Signs of abuse – the signs of abuse that anyone who has contact with a child or young person, including Governors and volunteers should look out for.

Roles and responsibilities – in relation to safeguarding.

The DSL/DDSL roles and responsibilities have expanded to include changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, which include:

- review, plan and implement the filtering and monitoring standards.
- update our safeguarding policy and link policies to reflect the DfE standards in filtering and monitoring.
- add training to the current CPD schedule to include filtering and monitoring.
- keep governors and trustees updated and involve them in reviewing the standards, alongside the school's service providers and DSL/DDSL.
- A Trust wide Safer Recruitment draft policy is currently being developed to include changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. This will be shared in due course this term.

Induction and other training

The school will ensure that anyone who has contact with a child or young person including Governors and volunteers are appropriately trained; this includes, receiving regular updates and undertaking 3 yearly whole school training in safeguarding, this is for staff in school. The Safeguarding Governor completes specific training for their role every 3 years.

The DSL/DDSL ensure that all school volunteers undertake a safeguarding induction session with them. The session includes sharing the school's safeguarding policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and the use of mobile phone policy and from the Sheffield Safeguarding Induction Pack we highlight useful links.

Reporting – how to report a concern, who to go to within the school, who to report to at relevant agencies.

Process and procedures – expectations of anyone who has contact with a child or young person, including Governors and volunteers with regard to safeguarding, and the procedures and processes that should be followed, including the support provided to children. This will also include new guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 regarding how to handle any allegations made against an outside organisation or individual uses our school premises.

Children absent from education – this has replaced previous terminology of 'Children missing education'. It highlights that a robust response is needed for those children persistently absent from education.

Filtering and Monitoring – school provides a safe environment to learn and work and when online. Filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from potential harmful and inappropriate online material. The DSL/DDSL have responsibility for 'understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place'. This will include ensuring staff and governors have an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

School uses appropriate filtering and monitoring technology on school devices and networks. Smoothwall is the system currently used in school and across Peak Edge Trust.

Safer recruitment – how staff, volunteers and Governors are checked for their suitability to work within the school, [this includes keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 updated advice regarding online searches](#).

Curriculum – how children learn about how to keep safe.

Implementation – how the policy will be managed and have its delivery overseen.

Section 2 – recognising signs of abuse

Children who may require early help

All staff, including Governors and volunteers, who work within Nook Lane, should be alert to the potential need for early help for children, following the procedures identified for initiating early help using the local and current Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership Threshold. Children who are most likely at risk are those who:

- Are disabled and have specific additional needs
- Have special educational needs
- Are a Young Carer
- Are privately fostered
- Have returned home to their family from care
- Are showing signs of engaging in ant-social or criminal behaviour
- Are in family circumstance presenting challenges for the child – substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence.
- Are showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- Are showing signs of displaying behaviour or views that are considered to be extreme.
- Are misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Are not attending school or are at risk of exclusion from school.
- Frequently go missing/goes missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk from trafficking, modern slavery, exploitation or radicalisation.

The DSL and DDSL use local early help assessment/early help processes to support children. Where a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to the local authority children's social care (and if appropriate, the Police) is made immediately.

Child abuse

Abuse is 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 relevant regarding the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family, an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

In relation to children, safeguarding and promoting their welfare is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.

- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

There are four types of abuse as defined in ‘Keeping Children safe in Education’.

- **Physical abuse** – may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse** – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, 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 cyber bullying, causing the child to frequently 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, but it may also occur alone.
- **Sexual abuse** – abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.
- **Neglect** – the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child’s health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect, and that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap, therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL.

Contextual Safeguarding

All staff, especially the DSL and DDSL, need to be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms).

Contextual safeguarding shifts the emphasis to include family dynamics, as well as peers relations, schools and other environments such as community locations. We therefore seek to identify and respond to harm

or abuse posed to children outside of their home. As children move through Nook Lane, they may spend increasing amounts of time socialising independently of their families, in the wider community and/or online.

Threats may take different forms, children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines; trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

Bullying and forms of bullying on and offline including prejudice based and cyber bullying is also abusive and will include at least one or more, of the defined categories of abuse. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

Nook Lane Junior School meet and liaise regularly with the DSL/DDSLs of other schools both within and outside of our trust. We share information regarding the safeguarding themes and areas of concerns within our schools to enable us to identify any trends, patterns and threats within our local community and within the city. We use this information to support teaching and learning of identified topics that are age appropriate within school, linked to our RSHE curriculum. We do not wait for a topic to be covered in our original RSHE overview; we will respond in a timely manner to current themes within our school and local area.

We are aware that some of our children with additional vulnerabilities, including those SEND, communication issues and reduced or increasing independence levels, will need additional support both in lessons and through direct work with families.

Nook Lane Junior School has an Integrated Resource for children with social communication difficulties and autism. We also have children in the mainstream school who have social communication needs, learning difficulties and/or other additional learning needs. We are aware and understand that this may cause a communication barrier regarding how they share information regarding their safety and well-being with us. Through agreed methods of communication; colour coded cards, pictures, emotional well-being cards/emojis, 'big drawings', emotionally available adults who work with specific children and have an understanding of their communication needs, we are able to find out about how a child is feeling and any concerns or worries that they may have. Using One Page Profiles to highlight how a child communicates when dysregulated or upset, helps us to monitor when help and support may be needed.

Physical abuse

Most children collect cuts and bruises and injuries, and these should always be interpreted in the context of the child's medical/social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, elbows, knees, shins and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given; these can often be visible on the soft parts of the body, where accidental injuries are unlikely, cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks.

A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body.
- Multiple bruises, in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh.
- Cigarette burns.

- Human bite marks.
- Broken bones.
- Scalds, with upward splash marks.
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation.
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, in hot weather.
- Depression.
- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Running away for home.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify as there are often no outward physical signs. Indications may be a developmental delay due to failure to thrive and grow. However, children who appear well care for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents/carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children. Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour – sulking, hair twisting, rocking.
- Being unable to play.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Self-harm.
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress.

Sexual abuse

There is an underreporting of sexual abuse within the family. All staff/volunteers play a crucial role in identifying and reporting any concerns that they may have through observation of play of younger children and understanding the indicators of behaviour in older children which may be underlining such abuse.

Staff and volunteers need to be aware that adults, men or women, or other children, who use children to meet their own sexual needs, abuse both girls and boys of all ages. Indications of sexual abuse may be physical or from the child's behaviour. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, that they are listened to and taken seriously. The physical signs may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital area.
- Bruising or bleeding near the genital area.
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Vaginal discharge or infection.
- Stomach pains.
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
- Pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g becoming aggressive or withdrawn.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Nightmares.
- Running away from home.
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level.
- Sexual drawing or language.
- Bedwetting.
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about.
- Substance or drug abuse.
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
- Not allowed to have friends, particularly in adolescence.
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Neglect

It can be difficult to recognise neglect. Its effects can be long term and damaging for children. It is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse.

A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. It can have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing. The physical signs may include:

- Being constantly dirty or 'smelly'.
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.
- Losing weight, or being constantly underweight.
- Inappropriate or dirty clothing.

Neglect may be indicated by changes in behaviour which may include:

- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.
- Not having many friends.
- Complaining of being tired all of the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.

Sexual violence, sexual abuse and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff and volunteers are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'. We need to be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of school.

For the purpose of this policy, 'consent' is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, and be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. Such behaviour would constitute to harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). The age of consent is 16.

Sexual violence refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape** – a person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis and the person (B) does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration** – person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault** – person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent** – person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual 'jokes' and taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content.
 - Upskirting.
 - Sexualised online bullying.
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

For the purpose of this policy, 'upskirting' refers to the act, as identified in the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person's clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person's genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including pupils and staff, of any gender, can be a victim of upskirting.

For the purpose of this policy, 'consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos', colloquially known as 'sexting', is defined as the sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. 'Indecent imagery' is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing.
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way.
- Any sexual activity involving a child.
- Someone hurting a child sexually.
- Sexual activity that involves animals.

Section 3 - Specific safeguarding issues

There are specific issues that have become critical issues in safeguarding. The school will endeavour to ensure that staff, governors and volunteers are familiar with these issues, namely:

- **Adverse childhood experiences/trauma informed practice**
- Bullying including cyber bullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- **Child on child sexual violence and harassment**
- Children at risk of criminal exploitation (CRE)
- Domestic Violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and Youth Violence
- Gender based violence/Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Mental Health
- Private fostering
- Preventing extremism and radicalisation
- Online abuse/sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking
- Missing children and vulnerable adults
- Child sexual abuse within the family.
- Poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child on child abuse.

Prevent duties

Extremism refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Extremism also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Nook Lane will ensure all staff, governors and volunteers need to be aware of extremism, including the signs of it, alerts to concerning behaviours, and ideologies considered to be extreme. They need to have an understanding of the British Values agenda and adhere to their duties in the Prevent guidance 2015 to prevent radicalisation. The Headteacher and governors will:

- Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism.

- Ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with issues arising.
- Communicate the importance of the duty
- Provide appropriate and sufficient training on the Prevent duty.
- Ensure all staff, governors and volunteers implement the duty.

Nook Lane will respond to any concern about Prevent as a safeguarding concern and will report using local safeguarding procedures. This may involve a referral to Channel using the case pathway process. We will work in partnership, undertaking risk assessments where appropriate and proportionate to risk, building our children's resilience to radicalisation. We will record our concerns, storing them using the usual process in school.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) & Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE)

CSE is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

Nook Lane recognises that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge – others sharing images/videos of them on social media. The school will recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited, they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. We recognise this is relevant to boys and girls. Risk factors may include:

- Going missing, staying out unusually late.
- Engagement in offending.
- Disengagement from education.
- Using drugs or alcohol.
- Unexplained gifts/money.
- Overly secretive.
- Repeat concerns about sexual health.
- Decline in emotional wellbeing.
- Unexplained absence from school.
- Association in gangs.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Carrying weapons, access to or carrying unusual number of mobile phones.

All suspected case or actual cases of CSE/CRE are a safeguarding concern in which child protection procedures will be followed; this will include referral to the police. If any staff are concerned about a pupil, they should refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in school.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) including County Lines

Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. This can include those involved in serious crime. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

For the purposes of this policy, 'child criminal exploitation' is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

Specific forms of CCE can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK, no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Signs indicating criminal exploitation:

- Persistently going missing from education or home/being found out of area.
- Unexplained money, clothes, gifts, mobile phones or unexplained injuries.
- Excessive receipt of texts/calls.
- Relationships with controlling/older people or groups or changes in relationships.
- Leaving home/care, without explanation.
- Suspicion of physical assault/unexplained injuries.
- Parental concerns.
- Carrying weapons.
- Significant decline in school results/performance.
- Gang association or isolation from peers or social networks.
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

More specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines includes:

- Going missing and being found in areas away from home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g knife crime,
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owing a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Criminal exploitation of children is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the DSL who will seek advice from agencies. This will mean a referral into the Police and Social Care.

Carrying knives/offensive weapons and Gang Culture

Children bringing/carrying a knife/offensive weapon onto Nook Lane's premises is a criminal offence and immediate action will be taken by calling the police. The guidance on 'Searching, screening and confiscation for Headteachers, schools and Governors, January 2018' will be consulted and we will consider and may apply disciplinary procedure.

If a member of staff suspects a pupil of being involved in gang culture, this is a safeguarding concern and will require a discussion with the DSL who will seek advice from professionals/agencies, including reference to the safeguarding procedures as outlined by the local authority.

Sending of indecent images through Digital Media Devices

Nook Lane recognises that this is a safeguarding concern for all pupils. Children of different ages send and receive images through digital media. There is a growing use of social media across school and children must be supported if they receive such images.

In the event of such a concern, we will seek advice from agencies/professionals, acknowledging that there is national and local guidance to adhere to. We will respond by working closely with parents/carers. We will teach children about this aspect of safeguarding through online safety/RSHE lessons.

We will refer to:

- Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people, UK Council for Internet Safety.
- Dfe guidance 2018 on Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice for Schools.
- Dfe guidance June 2019 on Teaching Online Safety in Schools.

Online Safety including filters and monitoring

We have a comprehensive Online Safety Policy in place to support children's understanding of the risks related to being online. This can be identified within our RSHE curriculum.

We will check that Nook Lane's filtering provider is signed up to the relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content, Tour Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse and Terrorist Content). Staff have signed the Acceptable use Policy and this has been shared in staff meetings. Governors have access to the same policy. Training includes use of filter (Smoothwall) systems. In accordance with our online safety policy, any incidents flagged through filtering, will be recorded and acted upon (see our Online safety Policy and DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards).

Filtering and monitoring

The DSL/DDSL have responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place. This will include ensuring staff and governors have an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to reviewing the effectiveness of the school's filtering and monitoring.

Filtering is designed to prevent users from accessing inappropriate material through Internet searches or software.

Monitoring user activity on school devices is an important part in providing a safe environment for children and staff. Effective monitoring must pick up incidents urgently, (at Nook Lane through daily alerts, allowing prompt action to take place and a record made of the outcome). Monitoring strategies to minimise safeguarding risks on Internet connected devices include:

- Physically monitoring by staff watching the screens of users.
- Network monitoring using log files of Internet traffic and web access.

- Individual device monitoring through software or third-party services.

The DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards include:

- Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Reviewing and monitoring filtering and monitoring provision at least annually, this will take place across the Trust with BlueBox our IT provider and Smoothwall.
- School filtering systems should block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting on teaching and learning.
- Effective monitoring strategies that meet the safeguarding needs of the school.

School uses appropriate filtering and monitoring technology on school devices and networks. Smoothwall is the system currently used in school and across Peak Edge Trust.

The DSL/DDSL and Online Safety Lead will be receiving training from Smoothwall

(Please refer to the school's London Grid for Learning -LGFL audit regarding online safety and risk assessment and the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

Honour Based Abuse (HBA), encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practises such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already have suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), compromise all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genital genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. (World Health Organisation 2016).

FGM has been an embedded practice for centuries in some countries, including countries in Africa, the Middle East, Iran, Iraq, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Occupied Palestinian Territories, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan.

The World Health Organisation, estimated between 100-140 million women and girls worldwide have undergone FGM, but prevalence of FGM in the UK is difficult to estimate because of the hidden nature of the crime.

All suspected or actual cases of FGM are a safeguarding concern and safeguarding procedures will be followed. This will include referral to the police. If any staff are concerned about a pupil, they will refer to the DSL/DDSL in school.

It is a mandatory reporting duty for all teachers to report to the police where it is believed an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 in the UK. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.

There are 4 types of FGM, mainly carried out on girls between the ages of five to ten. In some countries it is practised on babies as young as two to three days old and in other areas, it is practised prior to marriage or as part of the wedding ritual.

It is the parent's decision as to whether their daughters are 'cut', but they face tremendous pressure from older members of their families, especially, if they return to their country of origin. In most countries, including the UK, FGM, is illegal. Signs may include:

- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period.
- Not participating in physical education.
- Unauthorised or extended leave, vague explanations or plans for removal of a female in a high- risk category (parents from a country who are known to practice FGM), especially over summer.
- Plans to take a holiday which may be unauthorised, unexplained or extended in a country known to practice FGM.
- Having difficulty sitting, standing, walking, or looking uncomfortable.
- Finding it hard to sit for long periods, where there was not a problem previously.
- Spending longer than usual in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating, or having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Increased emotional and psychological needs – withdrawn, depressed, or significant change in behaviour.
- Reluctant to undergo and medical examination.
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the reason.
- Talking about pain/discomfort between the legs.

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM:

- Girls' family have a history of practising FGM – this is the biggest risk factor to consider.
- FGM being known to be practised in the girls' community or country of origin.
- A parent/family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out.
- Family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl –
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society.
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a 'special occasion' to /become a woman'.
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
 - Talking about FGM in conversation, a girl may tell other children about it, although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion.
 - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (Child health record) and /or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.
 - The above indicators and factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter onto a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule. We may only have one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they should speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place, with the designated safeguarding lead/deputy designated safeguarding lead.

Local safeguarding procedures will be activated and a referral made to the local authorities designated officer, seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 02070080151, or fm@fco.gov.uk, refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, class teacher/learning mentor as appropriate.

Allegations of abuse against other children/child on child abuse including sexual harassment

We are aware that some children abuse other children or their peers and the reasons for this are complex and are often multi-faceted. Peer on peer abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. We understand that we need to have clear mechanisms and procedures in place to identify and report incidents or concerns. We have a zero-tolerance approach to child on child abuse and aim to eliminate such behaviour at Nook Lane.

Child on child abuse is a safeguarding concern and normal procedures will be followed. We will consider and may apply the disciplinary procedure outlined in the school's behaviour policy. We will offer support to a victim. We recognise child on child abuse can take many forms:

- Bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment – including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation – and hazing type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.

We will challenge this type of abuse and will use the curriculum to address and tackle child on child abuse. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled.

This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

In school we record any incident of child on child abuse. This includes an explicit category on CPOMs for both child on child abuse and specifically sexual harassment. This is carefully monitored by staff and responded to immediately by the safeguarding team.

Mental health of children and young people

Where children have experience abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is vital that staff are aware of how these experiences can impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education.

Staff are aware that children's vulnerabilities related to mental health may be impacted by other safeguarding concerns. When making referrals, the child's mental health should be shared.

Mental health problems, can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff will be alert to behaviour signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If you have mental health concerns about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by speaking with DSL/DDSL.

If staff have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action. There are a range of support mechanisms in school to support pupils with their mental health. Significant concerns will be referred to their GP or directly to CAMHs. Staff should not attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health difficulty, the school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional.

The school has one member of staff who have completed a diploma in trauma who can support staff by leading on training in this area. The school also has a Senior Lead in Mental health who can also provide support regarding mental health.

Children absent from education (Previously known as children missing in education)

A child absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are more at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect.
- Are at risk of a forced marriage or FGM, come from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families.
- Come from the families of service personnel.
- Go missing or run away from home or care.
- Are supervised by the youth justice team.
- Cease to attend school.
- Come from new migrant families.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges both on and offline. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying than other children.
- The potential for children with SEN and disabilities or medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Difficulties regarding cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school, or the consequence of doing so.

We are aware of these additional challenges, and where required, will provide extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities. Staff are aware of the additional challenges faced by those with SEN or disabilities.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will involve close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead/deputy and the SENDco. We will consider extra pastoral support for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. A child can be a victim without being physically hurt, as they could be an observer of the abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development, and ability to learn.

A child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

We understand the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school via an Operation Encompass letter on the Anycoms system. The DSL/DDSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL/DDSL will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures). Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL/DDSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff. If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification. Visitors are expected to sign the visitor's book and wear a visitor's badge/lanyard.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as an educational psychologist, will be asked to show their photo ID and will be asked to confirm their DBS clearance; or the organisation sending the professional, such as the local authority or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school, any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individuals or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day:

- A check will be made for information about changes to the normal collection routines.
- Reasonable attempts will be made to contact: parents, carers or others with parental responsibility at home or at work or other adults authorised to collect the child or vulnerable young person for the setting.
- The child will not leave the premises with anyone other than, parents, carers, others with parental responsibility or other authorised persons.
- If no-one can be contacted to collect the child after one hour, the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub or police will be contacted.
- The child will stay at the setting in the care of two staff members until safely collected wither by the parent, carer, a person with parental responsibility, other authorised person, social worker or police officer.
- Staff should never take the child home with them or provide a lift to them in their own car.

A full written report of the incident and outcome must be recorded on CPOMs.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We are also aware that a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and this requires staff to have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep them safe. We understand that all agencies must work together and take prompt action on concerns to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group. The school will also ensure that care leavers are supported with pathways including liaison with the local authority where a personal advisor will be appointed.

Section 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 states designated teachers will have the responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of those who have left care. The virtual school head at the local authority manages the pupil premium plus grant for looked after children. The designated teacher should work with the virtual school head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of the looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in each child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the virtual school head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children. Statutory guidance on

promoting the education of looked after children contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of virtual school heads.

Children with family members in prison and part of the court system

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designated to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against the or for crimes they have witnessed. A guide for 5-11 year olds explains each step of the process and the support and special measures that are available. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families, including for the children involved. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service.

Parental alcohol and drug use

Parents' dependent alcohol and drug use can negatively impact on children's physical and emotional wellbeing, their development and their safety. The impacts on children include:

- Physical maltreatment and neglect
- Poor physical and mental health
- Development of health harming behaviours in later life, for example using alcohol and drugs and at an early age, which predicts more entrenched future use
- Poor school attendance due to inappropriate caring responsibilities
- Low educational attainment
- Involvement in anti-social or criminal behaviour

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL/DDSL will make a referral to children's social care.

Other vulnerable groups

Home educated children can be more vulnerable than other children and with regard to the motivations of the intentions to home educate. The school has a responsibility to those who are thinking about or who are about to home educate, including those who have been removed from the school roll with a view to home educate.

Young Carers can be more vulnerable or placed at risk. It is important to identify young carers and ensure that they are supported to help reach their potential with an understanding that the school will need to refer into early help social care services for an assessment of their needs.

Private fostering occurs when a child is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. The school has a duty to notify the local authority if it is thought or known that a child may be privately fostered or subject to a host family arrangement which is unclear or ambiguous.

Use of the school premises for non-school activities/extra- curricular activities

If the school hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, such as extra-curricular activities, it will ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe.

Where the school provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided by another body, this not be the case; therefore school will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The school will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

Extra-curricular activities and clubs hosted by external bodies, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extra-curricular activities and clubs need to be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff need to understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to social care or the police, if necessary.

Inline with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, where there are allegations made against an outside organisation or individual using the school premises, 'as with any safeguarding allegation, schools and colleges should follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)'.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans (LGBT+)

We recognise that the experience of children who are LGBT+ can be complex and they may require additional support from school to ensure they are safe. Being LGBT is not in itself a risk factor for harm. But children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not), can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT. If the child who is LGBT does not have a trusted adult who they can be open with, this can create a risk.

Staff should endeavour to reduce additional barriers faced, providing a safe space for them to speak out or share concerns with members of staff. LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory curriculum and this is referenced in our RSHE policy.

Section 4 - Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

The DSL/DDSL roles and responsibilities have expanded to include changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, which include:

- review, plan and implement the filtering and monitoring standards.
- update our safeguarding policy and link polices to reflect the DfE standards in filtering and monitoring.
- add training to the current CPD schedule to include filtering and monitoring.
- keep governors and trustees updated and involve them in reviewing the standards, alongside the school's service providers and DSL/DDSL.

- A Trust wide Safer Recruitment draft policy is currently being developed to include changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. This will be shared in due course this term.

Anyone who has contact with children, including Governors and volunteers have responsibility for the following:

- Participate in a safeguarding induction meeting, using the Sheffield Safeguarding information pack, with the DSL or DDSL. All relevant policies are shared and discussed.
- Understanding this policy and their role in it.
- Always consider what is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Be alert to signs of abuse, and the need to refer on to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL will usually decide on the next steps. Any member of staff, Governor or volunteer can make a referral.
- Listen to the child's voice.
- Be aware of the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership procedures <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb>
- Have a good understanding of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' guidance from the Department of Education.
- Any safeguarding concerns they have about the Headteacher, should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

Roles and responsibilities Governors and leaders

Governors and school leaders have responsibility for the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements and ensuring:

- All governors participate in safeguarding induction training using the Sheffield Safeguarding induction pack, this also includes reading Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and the NGA e-learning training, 'Safeguarding, how to fulfil the governor role'. Our Safeguarding Governor also participates in Governor Safeguarding Training every 3 years.
- They understand this policy and their role in the strategic leadership of safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure all staff working with children read at least Part 1 of KCSIE.
- Ensure staff who do not work directly with children read either Part 1 or Annex A of KCSIE.
- A DSL/DDSL are in place and they have access to appropriate and regular training. Ensuring DSL/DDSL are available during the day when possible and contactable.
- A nominated Governor for Safeguarding is in place who can also provide a link to the local authority, other partners and agencies.
- An appointed teacher who is responsible for Children who are Looked After (CLA) is in place who understands their safeguarding responsibilities.
- They are up to date with emerging issues in safeguarding and recognise the strategies by the local authority in trying to keep children safe.
- Safeguarding and child protection training for staff and Governors is provided regularly as required, at least annually.
- Procedures are in place for handling allegations against staff, or volunteers and any such concerns are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in every case.
- All staff or anyone who has contact with a child, including Governors and frequent visitors, be given mandatory induction on their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- Important policies linked to this policy, such as those for behaviour, bullying, online safety, safer recruitment etc are kept up to date.

- Children are taught about safeguarding, including online and sex and relationships, through the RSHE curriculum.
- The local authority be notified if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan or if it is thought or known that a child may be privately fostered.
- That the school use the local authority Case Referral Pathway for reporting concerns about extremism which may include a referral to Prevent and/or social care.
- They are aware of the 'Learning From Serious Case Reviews'.
- All staff are aware of the school's Whistleblowing Policy.
- That all child protection and safeguarding records are stored securely, and are up to date, and are retained in accordance with the latest version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' and ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, within 5 days when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that needs to be shared.

We will ensure all Governors receive appropriate training, including online training at induction. This will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategies challenge to assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and robust. Their training to be updated annually.

School Volunteers

Creating a safe environment

We aim to create an environment in which:

- All staff, including Governors and volunteers feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.
- The buildings, including surroundings, are safe and somewhere where children can feel safe.
- Risk assessments are completed with regard to appropriate adult/child ratios for school visits and residential and with regard to the vulnerabilities and age of our pupils.
- Parents/carers know about our principles on safeguarding and their role in it.
- There are clear protocols at reception for visitors and contractors with procedures in place to ensure the appropriate questions are asked and checks made.

Section 5 – safeguarding procedures and processes

We will act swiftly in identifying and acting on early help needs, safeguarding and child protection in line with the policies and procedures identified for the Sheffield Safeguarding Partnership. The school will work closely with local safeguarding partners and follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. The school will act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements.

Early help

Nook Lane aims to provide support as soon as a problem emerges. All staff, including Governors and volunteers should be aware of what early help means, how to identify emerging needs, see Sections 2 and 3, and understand their role within it. This includes sharing information with the DSL/DDSL, liaising with other professionals and supporting children identified in the school, who may need early help intervention.

We will be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of our local arrangement.

Referring to Children's Social Care

Where welfare and safeguarding concerns are identified, a child having an injury or has made a disclosure of sexual abuse, this is a child protection concern and safeguarding procedures must be followed. Concerns must be reported to the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible. The DSL/DDSL will act upon the information received. It should be noted that anyone can make a referral into social care.

If the child has been part of an Early Help Assessment, then a chronology, a copy of the assessment, together with a copy of the Multi-Disciplinary Plan, and any supporting document evidence to support a threshold, should be attached to the written confirmation. Details should include: who undertook the assessment and their contact details.

When there are concerns for a child, and if the school are aware that the case is open to the Multi-Agency Team, they should discuss whether to request escalation to Children's Social Care. If the child does not have a lead professional or allocated social worker, then the appropriate numbers to contact can be found in the safeguarding file.

We ensure that we have spoken to the family about their concerns and proposed actions, unless to do so would place the child at significant risk/imminent danger because of a disclosure made. The decision not to inform parents/carers must be justified and the details recorded. If a child makes a disclosure or presents with an injury, it is imperative that advice is sought immediately prior to the child returning home and as soon as the school become aware of this.

Essential information for making a referral include:

- Full names and dates of birth for the child and other members of the family.
- Address and daytime phone numbers for the parents, including mobile.
- The child's address and phone number.
- Whereabouts of the child (and siblings).
- Child and family's ethnic origin.
- Child and family's main language.
- Actions taken and people contacted.
- Special needs of the child, including need for an accredited interpreter.
- Clear indication of the family's knowledge of the referral and whether they have consented to the sharing of confidential information.
- Details of the person making the referral.

Other information may include:

- Previous addresses and addresses of wider family members.
- Schools and nurseries attended by the child and others in the household.
- Name, address and phone number of GP/Midwife/health Visitor/School Nurse.
- Hospital ward/consultant/named nurse and dates of admission/discharge.
- Details of other children who may be in contact with the alleged abuser.
- Details of other practitioners involved with the family.
- Child's legal status and anyone not already mentioned who has parental responsibility.
- History of previous concerns and any previous FCAF or Initial Assessments completed.
- Any other information that is likely to impact on the undertaking of an assessment or Section 47 enquiry.

Allegations of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Systems are in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made. Preplanning, effective training and effective policies will provide support for an appropriate response. Governing bodies should ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working, in line with statutory guidance; Working to Safeguard Children. Considerations will include:

- The wishes of the victim, how they want to proceed, especially important in the context of sexual violence and harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support they will be offered. This will need to be balanced with our duty and responsibilities to protect other children.
- The nature of the alleged incident/s, including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HBS) has been displayed.
- The ages of the children involved.
- The developmental stages of the children involved.
- Any power imbalance between the children – is/are the alleged perpetrator/s significantly older, more mature, confident and well-known social standing? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one off or a substantial pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature).
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children.
- Importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or school staff?
- Other related issues and the wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

All staff should consider how to immediately support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator/s (and any other children involved/impacted).

Records

All concerns about a child will be recorded and records kept in accordance with the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This record will be a separate child protection/welfare record held on CPOMs, including actions taken, decisions made and any outcomes/feedback. The DSL and DDSL have full access to these files.

DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL/DDSL. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

There are different levels of confidentiality when recording and sharing safeguarding concerns. It is important that staff are aware of parent's rights to request information recorded about their child. Reports on CPOMs should be accurate and follow the guidelines below.

We will not destroy any child protection/welfare records including records which hold information on allegations against staff and any other person working in the school or connected to the school.

We use the system of CPOMs to record and save safeguarding concerns. This is an online tool that can only be accessed through user name and password. The DSL and DDSL are the only members of staff to have access to all records. All other staff are able to add incidents. Training will support the use of accurate recording or safeguarding concerns.

Schools have an obligation to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry (further information found on the IICSA website). All other records should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Where children leave the school, the DSL/DDSL will ensure that their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school to have support in place for when the child arrives. The DSL/DDSL will ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Safer recruitment

The school will ensure that safer recruitment practices are always followed and that the requirement outlined in the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. This includes:

- Verifying the identity of the candidates.
- A check of professional qualifications.
- Checking the right to work in the UK.
- DBS checks.
- Prohibition checks (where required).
- Section 128 checks (where required).
- Suitability checks (disqualification from working in a schooling environment).
- Additional overseas checks where relevant.
- Asking for and follow up at least two references.
- Scrutinising applications for gaps in employment.

Some of these will be completed by our Human Resources service, Capita.

We will ensure that our application packs contain a link to this policy. All interview panels will have at least one member who has undergone safer recruitment training and we will include at least two questions regarding safeguarding. We will have a Single Central Record which will cover all staff, including Governors, volunteers, frequent visitors, agency and supply and others according to their role and responsibility. We will ensure this record is regularly updated and reviewed regularly.

We will ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities linked to the staff code of conduct. This also includes advice on conduct, safe use of mobile phones and guidance on personal/professional boundaries in emailing, messaging, or participating in social networking environments.

We will only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own does not provide adequate information.

Short listing

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. This information should only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted. The purpose of self-declaration is so that candidates will have the

opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at interview before the DBS certificate is received.

When short listing we will:

- Ensure that at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise.
- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for the, explore all potential concerns.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, we will consider carrying out an online search using Google, as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

References

We seek references to allow school to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. We obtain references before interview, where possible, as this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. Any references collected should not include any repeated concerns or allegations that have been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Disclosure and barring service (DBS)

This service helps employers make safe recruitment decisions which helps prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. The DBS are responsible for:

- Processing requests for criminal record checks.
- Deciding whether it is appropriate for a person to be placed on or removed from a barred list.
- Placing or removing people from the DBS Children's Barred List and Adult's Barred List for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Providing an online DBS service.

The DBS search police records and in relevant cases, the barred list information, before issuing a DBS certificate to the applicant. A DBS check will be requested as part of the pre-recruitment checks following an offer of employment, including unsupervised volunteering roles, and staff engaging in regulated activity, where the definition of regulated activity is met. We will follow advice on DBS checks from our HR provider, and this includes:

- Where relevant, a separate Barred Check List has been completed.
- Individuals are not disqualified from working with children under the Child Care (Disqualifications) Regulations 2009 and will adhere to any changes made to this.
- A check to include a Secretary of State Prohibition Order (Teacher Prohibition Order) and this may mean on Teaching Assistants.
- A Section 128 Direction Check where relevant and in any case for all governors (who will also be the subject of DBS checks).

If a person in regulated activity is dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned, we will ensure a referral is made to the DBS.

Opportunities to teach children about safeguarding

Nook Lane aims to provide a preventative education. This is most effective within a whole school that prepares pupils for life in Britain, creating a zero- tolerance culture for sexism, misogyny and gender discrimination, homophobia, bi-phobic and sexual violence/harassment.

Our ethos and core values are supported by the school's positive behaviour policy as well as a planned programme of RSHE based learning, delivered in weekly lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Considerations are made for our vulnerable pupils, including those with additional learning needs and lesson plans shared with parents/carers. The programme will support at age-appropriate stages, issues which include:

- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Boundaries and consent
- How to recognise abusive relationships, including coercive and controlling behaviour, concepts of and laws related to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, honour-
- based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) ad how to access support.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

Please see our RSHE Policy and Online Safety Policy for more information. Governors are aware of this curriculum.

Section 6 – Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers who work with children.

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

Linked to cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers or contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed the child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and /or
- Behaved towards a child/children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school.

If in doubt that the concern meets harm threshold, we will consult with the local authority designated officer (LADO). We will deal with any allegations of abuse quickly, that provides effective child protection and also supports the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A case manager will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified as early as possible.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child/other children are at risk of harm. Or the case is so serious that there may be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative. Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Moving the child/children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted.
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location – an alternative school or other work.

The case manager can seek views from the LADO as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions of outcomes of allegation investigations

- Substantiated – there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- Malicious – there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation.
- False – there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- Unsubstantiated – there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (This does not imply guilt or innocence).
- Unfounded – to reflect cases where is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegations being made.

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below.
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated office, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence, in such cases the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as possible after contacting the police).
- Inform the accused individual of concerns/allegations and the likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking with the designated officer (and the police or children's social care service, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate, carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or could alternative arrangements such as those outlined above, be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services as appropriate.
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care.

- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at school and their contact details.
- If no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, school records this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate.
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following an agreement with children's social care services and/or police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents/carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies), while investigations are ongoing. Any parents/carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher, will be advised to seek legal advice.
- Keep the parents/carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child- no information will be shared regarding the staff member).
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible, the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

- If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as supply teachers and contracted staff provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.
- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

- The governing board will discuss with the agency, whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation.
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required.
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary).

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

- We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:
- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within a week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days.

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible.

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate, and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this. The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contract with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is;

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual/s who made it.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individuals/s who made it.

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation, and what information can be shared.
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents/carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality.
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation.
- How to manage press interest, if it arises.

Record keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file). For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any further reference.

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.
- Include any substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to discuss any improvements that could be made for future reference. This may include consideration of:

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff.
- The duration of the suspension.
- Whether or not the suspension was justified.
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened. We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child, to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns, including allegations about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1. Concerns may arise through:

- Suspicion.
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff.
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school.
- Pre-employment vetting checks.

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term low-level concern, is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may 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 allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone.
- Engaging with a child on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Humiliating pupils.

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating an open culture of trust and transparency, to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately. We do this by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns.
- Empowering staff to self- refer.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct at an early stage.
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when raised.
- Helping to identify any weaknesses in the school's safeguarding system.

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously.
- To the individual involved and any witnesses.

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision maker linked to low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken. Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Reviewed so that any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority. Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school.

Where a low- level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance.

Section 7 – Management of the policy

All governors need to be effective in their management of safeguarding. The governing body will ensure:

- All staff, including governors and volunteers, have read the policy.
- That it is displayed on the school’s website.
- The implementation of the policy.
- Review the policy on an annual basis.

The headteacher will report termly on safeguarding activity and progress to the Governing Body.

The DSL will complete the annual Safeguarding Audit and with an action plan which will be used to report on safeguarding activity and progress. A copy of which will be submitted to the local authority. This will be held and reported to the Sheffield Safeguarding Children’s Partnership.

The headteacher should report any significant issues to the Chair of the Governing Body that may have an impact on safeguarding in the school and using the normal protocols to inform the local authority if necessary.

Signed by:

Chair of governors *D. Shew* Date *8/10/23*

Headteacher *S. R. Abou-Davis* Date *29/9/23*

Designated Safeguarding Lead *J. Jones* Date *3/10/23*
D. Wilkinson *29/9/23*