Cherry Tree Primary School

Including Cherry Blossom Preschool

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2026–27

Date approved:	September 2026	**Date of next review:** September 2027
Effective from:	1 September 2026	
Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Mrs Laura Halpin	Deputy DSL: Anita Bottomley
Safeguarding governor:	Christine Mitchell-Brown	
Approved by:	Full governing board	

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Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Cherry Tree Primary School, including Cherry Blossom Preschool, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. This policy is written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE), in force from 1 September 2026.

1. Statement of intent

Our commitment

We believe that every child has the right to feel safe, be heard and achieve their full potential in a caring, inclusive and nurturing environment. Every member of our school community, including governors, staff, volunteers and visitors, has a duty to protect children from harm, identify concerns at the earliest opportunity and take appropriate action. Our safeguarding arrangements are child-centred: **the welfare of the child is paramount**.

What we mean by safeguarding

In line with KCSIE 2026, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- providing help and support as soon as concerns emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether inside or outside the home, including online;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Our approach

We will:

- maintain a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and staff believe "it could happen here";
- create an environment where children feel safe, respected and listened to;
- identify concerns early and respond promptly;
- promote professional curiosity, recognising that concerns rarely occur in isolation;
- work in partnership with families and external agencies;
- teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including online, through the curriculum;
- make sure all staff receive regular safeguarding training;
- operate robust safer recruitment procedures; and
- regularly review our safeguarding practice.

Scope

This policy applies to everyone working at or on behalf of the school, including Cherry Blossom Preschool, breakfast club and after school club: governors, leaders, teaching and support staff, volunteers, agency and supply staff, contractors, students on placement and visitors.

Legislation and guidance

This policy has regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;

- section 175 of the Education Act 2002;
- the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage;
- the Prevent duty guidance and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015;
- the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (mandatory reporting duty);
- the Domestic Abuse Act 2021;
- the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026;
- DfE: Working together to improve school attendance and Children missing education;
- DfE: Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges;
- DfE: Information sharing: advice for practitioners;
- UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025; and
- Warrington Safeguarding Partnership procedures.

Linked policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's Child-on-Child Abuse Policy, Online Safety Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct (including low-level concerns), Whistleblowing Policy, Attendance Policy, Children Missing Education Policy, Intimate Care Policy, SEND and Inclusion Policy, LAC Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy, PSHE and RSE Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equality Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy and data protection arrangements.

2. Key safeguarding contacts

Every member of staff must know who these people are and how to contact them. All can be reached through the school office on 01925 755885.

Role	Name	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), also lead for online safety and filtering and monitoring	Mrs Laura Halpin, Headteacher	School office, 01925 755885
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Anita Bottomley	School office, 01925 755885
Early years safeguarding lead, Cherry Blossom Preschool	Mrs Laura Halpin, Headteacher	School office, 01925 755885
Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children	Mrs Laura Halpin, Headteacher	School office, 01925 755885
Senior mental health lead	Mrs Laura Halpin, Headteacher	School office, 01925 755885
Safeguarding governor and Chair of Governors	Christine Mitchell-Brown	Through the Clerk to Governors, via the school office

A DSL or DDSL will always be available during school hours. If neither is available, staff must speak to a senior leader immediately and never delay a concern. Local contacts are listed in Appendix C.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will make sure that:

- safeguarding arrangements are effective and comply with statutory guidance;
- this policy and related procedures are in place and reviewed at least annually;
- a suitably trained DSL and DDSL are appointed, with the time and resources to carry out the role;
- safer recruitment procedures are followed and the Single Central Record is checked;
- all staff and governors receive safeguarding training at induction, updated regularly;
- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and reviewed at least once every academic year;
- children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through the curriculum; and
- safeguarding is monitored and challenged through governance.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will promote a strong safeguarding culture, make sure this policy is implemented consistently, support the DSL with sufficient time and resources, and make sure concerns are acted on promptly. The Headteacher manages allegations against staff, unless the allegation concerns the Headteacher.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems, in line with the DSL role description in KCSIE 2026. The DSL will:

- advise and support staff;
- manage referrals to children's social care, the Police, Channel and other agencies;
- keep safeguarding records and make sure they are transferred securely when pupils move school;
- coordinate safeguarding training;
- work with the Virtual School Head to promote the education of children who have or have had a social worker;
- share information with partner agencies, including through Operation Encompass; and
- take part in safeguarding meetings and plans for individual children.

All staff

All staff will:

- read at least Part one of KCSIE 2026 (or Annex A where appropriate to their role) and confirm they have done so;
- recognise signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and children who may benefit from Family Help;
- report concerns immediately to the DSL or DDSL and record them on CPOMS;
- follow the Staff Code of Conduct and maintain professional boundaries; and
- complete safeguarding training.

Volunteers, agency staff, contractors and visitors

All adults working in school are expected to follow this policy, know how to report a concern and maintain professional boundaries at all times.

4. Recognising need, abuse and vulnerability

Early identification and Family Help

Early identification and timely support are essential. Staff should be alert to children who may benefit from Family Help. In-school support is led by the school; wider Family Help is coordinated through Warrington Borough Council's children's services. The DSL will consider a referral where a child's needs cannot be met by the school alone.

Children who may be more vulnerable

Some children may need additional safeguarding support, including those who:

- have SEND or a disability, including those who may find it harder to communicate concerns;
- have a social worker, or have had one;
- are looked after, previously looked after or privately fostered;
- are young carers;
- have mental health needs;
- are persistently absent or missing from education;
- are at risk of criminal or sexual exploitation, serious violence or radicalisation;
- are affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse or parental mental ill-health;
- are questioning their gender; or
- experience family breakdown, homelessness or poverty.

These circumstances do not automatically mean a child is at risk of significant harm, but they should prompt staff to consider whether additional support is needed.

Pupils with SEND

Staff will not assume that indicators of possible abuse, such as changes in behaviour or mood, relate only to a child's SEND. The DSL and SENCO work together, and children are supported to communicate concerns in ways that work for them.

Abuse inside and outside the home

Abuse may happen within or outside the home, online or offline, and may be carried out by adults or other children. Harm outside the family includes child-on-child abuse, child criminal and sexual exploitation, county lines, serious violence, online exploitation and radicalisation. When responding, the school considers the wider context of the child's life.

5. Types of abuse, neglect and exploitation

Concerns may arise from a single incident or a pattern of events. Indicators alone do not confirm abuse, but staff must always report them.

Type	What staff may notice	Action
Physical abuse	Unexplained or repeated injuries, injuries that do not fit the explanation, flinching, fear of going home	Report to the DSL immediately

Type	What staff may notice	Action
Emotional abuse	Low self-esteem, extreme anxiety, withdrawal, over-compliance, fear of making mistakes, self-harm	Report to the DSL
Sexual abuse	Sexualised behaviour or knowledge beyond their age, unexplained gifts, reluctance to change for PE, distress	Report to the DSL immediately
Neglect	Persistent hunger, poor hygiene, unsuitable clothing, untreated medical needs, tiredness, poor attendance	Report to the DSL
Child criminal exploitation	Unexplained money or phones, going missing, new older friends, carrying drugs or weapons	Report to the DSL immediately
Child sexual exploitation	Older "boyfriends" or "girlfriends", gifts, going missing, secrecy, sharing images	Report to the DSL immediately
Domestic abuse	Changes in behaviour, anxiety, aggression, withdrawal, poor concentration, attendance concerns	Report to the DSL

Domestic abuse and Operation Encompass

Children can be victims of domestic abuse by seeing, hearing or experiencing its effects. The school takes part in Operation Encompass: when the Police attend a domestic abuse incident and believe a child may have been affected, they notify the DSL before the start of the next school day. The DSL decides what support the child needs and handles the information in line with data protection law.

Female genital mutilation and honour-based abuse

FGM is illegal and a form of child abuse. Teachers have a statutory duty to report to the Police, by calling 101, any case where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. They should also tell the DSL. Concerns about any other form of honour-based abuse, including forced marriage, are reported to the DSL.

Serious violence and weapons

Staff must report to the DSL any concern that a pupil may be carrying a weapon, or intends to use one. The DSL will assess the risk and involve the Police where needed.

Mental health

Mental health problems can be a sign that a child has suffered abuse, neglect or trauma. Staff should report concerns about self-harm, changes in behaviour or sleep, or other significant changes in wellbeing to the DSL. If staff believe a child is in immediate danger, they must call 999 or take the child to A&E. For urgent concerns that are not an emergency, they should call NHS 111.

Radicalisation and the Prevent duty

The school has a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Staff report any concern that a child may be at risk of radicalisation to the DSL, who

will decide whether to make a Prevent referral, which may lead to support through Channel. In an emergency, staff call 999.

Children missing education

Children who go missing from education, or are persistently absent, may be at risk of abuse, exploitation or radicalisation. The school follows its Attendance Policy and Children Missing Education Policy, contacts families on the first day of unexplained absence, and informs the Local Authority in line with statutory requirements, including when a parent intends to educate their child at home.

Looked-after children and children with a social worker

The designated teacher promotes the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children, working with the Virtual School Head. The DSL holds information about children who have a social worker, so that decisions take their circumstances into account.

Children questioning their gender

Where a child, or their parent, raises questions about the child's gender, the school will follow KCSIE 2026 and DfE guidance. The DSL is involved early, decisions are centred on the child's welfare and are recorded, and parents are involved unless doing so would put the child at risk of significant harm. Toilets, changing facilities and overnight accommodation on residential trips are single-sex.

6. Child-on-child abuse

All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. It is never dismissed as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". Staff should be aware that even if there are no reports, it may still be happening.

Child-on-child abuse includes:

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying;
- physical abuse, including assault and threats with a weapon;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment, including misogynistic behaviour;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images and videos, including AI-generated images ("deepfakes");
- upskirting; and
- initiation or hazing-type violence.

The school recognises that some forms of child-on-child abuse are more likely to involve girls as victims and boys as perpetrators, while all forms are unacceptable whoever is involved.

We reduce the risk through the curriculum, clear behaviour expectations, supervision and a culture where children know they will be listened to. All reports are passed to the DSL, who will consider the needs of the child who has been harmed, the child who has displayed the behaviour and any other children involved, and will involve parents, children's social care and the Police where appropriate. Full procedures are in the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

7. Responding to safeguarding concerns

The step-by-step process is in Appendix A.

Reporting a concern

Staff must report all concerns to the DSL or DDSL without delay. Concerns may come from a disclosure, something staff observe, information from another person or agency, or a change in a child's behaviour, presentation or attendance. Staff should never assume someone else has reported it.

If a child makes a disclosure

Do:

- listen carefully and stay calm;
- take the child seriously and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you;
- explain that you will need to share what they have told you with people who can help;
- record the child's words as accurately as possible; and
- report to the DSL or DDSL immediately.

Do not:

- promise confidentiality;
- ask leading questions or investigate;
- interrupt or press the child for more information;
- show shock or make judgements; or
- delay reporting.

Children should never be made to feel they are creating a problem by speaking up or are to blame for what has happened.

Immediate risk

If a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, inform the DSL or DDSL immediately. If they are unavailable, call 999 or contact children's social care directly. Anyone can make a referral to children's social care; staff who do so should tell the DSL as soon as possible.

Action by the DSL

The DSL will decide on the right response, which may include support in school, Family Help, advice from or a referral to children's social care, contacting the Police, or seeking specialist advice. All decisions are recorded.

Escalation

If a member of staff feels that the right action has not been taken, or that a child remains at risk, they must escalate their concern, through the Headteacher or directly to children's social care, using the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership's escalation procedure where needed.

8. Recording and information sharing

Recording

All concerns must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible and before the end of the working day. Records must be factual and include the date, time and place, the child's own words, what was seen or heard, any action taken and who the concern was reported to, distinguishing between fact, observation and opinion.

The DSL reviews CPOMS regularly to identify patterns and emerging risks, and audits records each half term. Concerns are categorised so that trends can be analysed; the categories are in Appendix E.

Information sharing and confidentiality

Timely information sharing is essential to keeping children safe. Data protection law does not prevent, and is not a barrier to, sharing information where it is necessary to protect a child. Information is shared with relevant professionals on a need-to-know basis. Staff never discuss safeguarding concerns with colleagues who do not need to know.

When a child moves school, the DSL transfers the child protection file securely within five school days for a move during the school year, or within the first five days of the new term, and obtains confirmation that it has been received.

9. Online safety, mobile phones and filtering and monitoring

Online safety

Online safety is part of the school's safeguarding arrangements and is taught through Computing, RSHE and assemblies. Teaching covers staying safe online, protecting personal information, healthy online relationships, grooming and exploitation, cyberbullying, misinformation, and the safe and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI). Online risks fall into four areas: content, contact, conduct and commerce. The school is alert to the safeguarding risks of generative AI, including AI-generated images.

Filtering and monitoring

The school meets the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards. The DSL has lead responsibility for understanding the systems, and the governing board makes sure they are in place. Our filtering and monitoring is provided by **SENSO.** The systems are reviewed at least once every academic year, and whenever there is a significant change, with the IT provider and the safeguarding governor. Filtering and monitoring support, but do not replace, staff supervision.

Mobile phones and cameras

Pupils' use of mobile phones during the school day is restricted, in line with our Mobile Phone Policy and the DfE's statutory mobile phones guidance. Staff must not use personal phones or devices to take photographs of children. In Cherry Blossom Preschool, as required by the EYFS framework, personal mobile phones and cameras are not used where children are present, and only school devices are used to take photographs.

Staff conduct online

Staff must model safe use of technology, follow the Acceptable Use Agreement and Staff Code of Conduct, and never use personal devices or social media accounts to communicate with pupils.

10. Early years: Cherry Blossom Preschool

This policy applies in full to Cherry Blossom Preschool. In line with the EYFS framework, the preschool has a named safeguarding lead (section 2), staff receive training to recognise and respond to concerns, and the policy covers the use of mobile phones and cameras. Staff are alert to safer eating, including choking risks, and to the needs of very young children who may not be able to tell an adult that they are being harmed.

11. Allegations against adults, low-level concerns and whistleblowing

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

Any concern that an adult working at the school, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors, has:

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

must be reported immediately to the Headteacher. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors. The Headteacher or Chair will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day and before any investigation, and will follow Part four of KCSIE 2026. The same process applies to allegations about adults using the school premises for activities such as lettings.

Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any behaviour by an adult that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, or causes a sense of unease, but does not meet the harm threshold. Examples include being overly friendly with a child, having favourites, being alone with a child unnecessarily, using inappropriate language or contacting pupils through personal social media.

Low-level concerns are shared with the Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors if about the Headteacher), recorded confidentially, reviewed to identify patterns, and dealt with fairly and proportionately. Staff are encouraged to self-report any situation where their own behaviour might be misinterpreted.

Whistleblowing

Staff must raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or about the way a concern has been handled, with the Headteacher, or with the Chair of Governors or the Local Authority where that is not appropriate. Staff can also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285. No member of staff will suffer detriment for raising a genuine concern.

12. Safer recruitment and training

Safer recruitment

The school follows Part three of KCSIE 2026. Before anyone starts work, the school completes the checks appropriate to the role, including:

- identity and right to work in the UK;
- an enhanced DBS check, with a children's barred list check for regulated activity;
- references, obtained before interview where possible;
- qualifications and, for teachers, a prohibition from teaching check;
- overseas checks where needed; and
- online searches for shortlisted candidates, with candidates told this will happen.

Governors have an enhanced DBS check. The school obtains written confirmation of checks for supply and agency staff and contractors, and keeps a Single Central Record, audited each half term.

Training

The training expected for each role is set out in Appendix D. In summary:

- all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety and filtering and monitoring, at induction and at least annually, with regular updates during the year;
- the DSL and DDSL complete DSL training every two years and update their knowledge at least annually; and
- governors receive safeguarding training at induction, updated regularly.

13. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher, DSL and governing board monitor safeguarding through the activities in Appendix F, including audits of CPOMS and the Single Central Record, governor visits, training records and reviews of filtering and monitoring.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board, and sooner if legislation, guidance or local procedures change. It is shared with all staff at induction and annual training, and published on the school website.

Appendix A: Responding to a safeguarding concern

Step	What to do
1. Recognise	You see something, a child tells you something, or someone else shares a concern.
Is the child in immediate danger?	**Yes:** call 999 and/or children's social care (01925 443322) straight away, then tell the DSL. **No:** go to step 2.
2. Respond	Stay calm, listen and reassure the child. Explain that you will need to share what they have told you. Do not ask leading questions, investigate or promise confidentiality.
3. Record	Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible and before the end of the working day: date and time, the child's exact words, what you saw or heard, any injuries or behaviour, your actions and who you told.
4. Report	Tell the DSL or DDSL immediately. Never assume someone else has reported it.
5. DSL action	The DSL decides what happens next: monitoring and support in school, Family Help, advice or a referral to children's social care, or contact with the Police.
6. Review	Actions and outcomes are recorded on CPOMS and the situation is kept under review.

If in doubt, speak to the DSL. It is always better to share a concern than to assume someone else will act.

Appendix B: Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
CCE	Child criminal exploitation
CPOMS	The school's safeguarding recording system
CSE	Child sexual exploitation
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
EYFS	Early years foundation stage
FGM	Female genital mutilation
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education

Acronym	Meaning
SCR	Single Central Record
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities

Appendix C: Local safeguarding contacts

In an emergency, if a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

Service	When to use it	Contact
Warrington children's social care (MASH)	Advice, information and referrals about a child's safety, Monday to Friday office hours	01925 443322 (option 1, then say "MASH"), or the online Children and Families Request for Support form on My Warrington
Warrington Emergency Duty Team	Urgent concerns outside office hours, at weekends and on bank holidays	**01925443322**
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Allegations about adults who work or volunteer with children	01925 442079; LADO@warrington.gov.uk
Cheshire Constabulary	To report a crime, or an FGM case	101 (non-emergency); 999 in an emergency
Warrington Safeguarding Partnership	Local safeguarding procedures and training	www.warringtonsafeguardingpartnerships.org.uk
Warrington Early Help Support Team	Family Help and early help advice	01925443322
School nursing (0–19 service)	Health and wellbeing advice and support	**Louise Williams 01925 946803**
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	Staff whose concerns have not been addressed	0800 028 0285 (weekdays 8am–8pm, weekends 9am–6pm); help@nspcc.org.uk
Kooth	Free, anonymous online wellbeing support for children and young people	www.kooth.com

Appendix D: Safeguarding training matrix

Role	Induction	Refresher	Updates and specialist training	Records
DSL	DSL training before or within 3 months of taking up the role	DSL training every 2 years; knowledge updated at least annually	Termly local and national updates; Prevent, Channel, Family Help, contextual safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, online safety, filtering and monitoring	Held by the school office, reviewed by the Headteacher and governors
Deputy DSL	DSL training within 3 months of taking up the role	DSL training every 2 years; knowledge updated at least annually	Termly updates; Prevent, Channel, Family Help, child-on-child abuse, online safety	Held by the school office, reviewed by the Headteacher and governors
Teaching staff	Safeguarding and child protection training; this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy and reporting systems	At least annually	Termly briefings; online safety, Prevent, mental health, neglect, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour	Held by the school office
Support staff, including TAs, admin, midday and site staff	Safeguarding and child protection training; role-specific information	At least annually	Termly updates; online safety, Prevent awareness, recognising abuse and neglect	Held by the school office
Governors	Safeguarding induction for all new governors	Regularly	Safeguarding governor training; safer recruitment and low-level concerns	Held by the school office
Volunteers and visitors	Safeguarding information and school expectations	As required	Updates when procedures change	Held by the school office

Appendix E: CPOMS safeguarding categories

Child protection; Family Help and early help; attendance; behaviour; bullying; child-on-child abuse; online safety; mental health and wellbeing; medical and health; domestic abuse; child criminal exploitation; child sexual exploitation; radicalisation and Prevent; children missing education; young carers; SEND safeguarding; looked-after and previously looked-after children; professional concerns, including allegations and low-level concerns; other welfare concerns. More than one category may be used for a concern.

Appendix F: Safeguarding audit schedule

Activity	Frequency
Single Central Record audit	Half-termly
CPOMS audit	Half-termly
Safeguarding governor visit	Termly
Filtering and monitoring check	Termly, with a full review at least once every academic year
Staff safeguarding updates	Termly, with an annual refresher
Policy review	Annually, or sooner if guidance changes