



Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Mission Statement

Botwell House Catholic Primary School is distinguished by the care, courtesy and concern extended to all its members, regardless of cultural differences and strives to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ to:

“Love one another as I have loved you”

Through a partnership between home, school and parish and through a broad and balanced curriculum, each valued individual is encouraged to grow in their journey of faith and strive towards excellence.

Botwell House Catholic Primary School seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her potential.

Current revision:	September 2025
Date for further revision:	September 2026
Reviewer:	Safeguarding Team
Delegated to:	FGB

Child Protection Rationale:

At Botwell House Catholic Primary School we will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and protect them from any form of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- zero tolerance to abuse, neglect or exploitation
- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

This policy is available on the school website and on CPOMS for staff. There is a reference and signpost to this policy in the staff handbook.

Child Protection Statement:

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors.

(See also – as linked to - the following school policies: Safer Recruitment, Whistleblowing (Raising Concerns), Allegations Against Staff, Welfare, Inclusion, e-Safety, iPad Acceptable Use for Staff, IT Computing Systems Acceptable Use, Staff Handbook, PSHCE, RSE, Equalities, Behaviour, Bullying & Racism, Health & Safety, Trips & Risk Assessments)

Aims & Purposes:

Aims:

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners

Policy principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity,

have equal rights to protection

- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm or has suffered harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

CP & SG Terminology:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. It also includes the ill-treatment of others is harmful to children in relation to domestic abuse ('including whether they see, hear or experience its effects')

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Exploitation is a form of abuse where someone uses a child for financial gain, sexual gratification, labour or personal advantage.

Sharing of Nude or Semi-nude Imagery (Sexting) means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's Air Drop which works offline. *(See the section on Child on Child Abuse & Online Safety on pages 17 & 18 of this policy)*

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) may involve an exchange for something the victim wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DSL refers to the designated safeguarding lead at the school

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

KCSIE refers to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Document 2025.

CPOMS refers to the school Child Protection Online Management System

The following three **Safeguarding Partners** are identified in KCSIE. They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs;

Purpose:

Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do. Parents, carers and other people can harm children either by direct acts or failure to provide proper care or both. Children may suffer neglect; emotional, physical or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Raising awareness of child protection issues through regular training and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan
- Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children. Please see our 'Safer Recruitment Policy' ratified by the governors.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

We recognise that because of our day-to-day contact with children, our school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.

The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Include opportunities in the RSE and PSHCE curriculums for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.
- continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of pupils they place with an alternative provision provider.

Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [The Children Act 2004](#) (and [1989](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(2021\)](#).
- [The Child Care Act 2006](#) & [Child Care Act Amendment 2016](#)

This policy and its procedures apply wherever staff or volunteers are working with pupils even where this is away from the School, for example an educational visit. It also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS - 2021) provision.

Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse. Botwell House Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The School will take all reasonable measures to:

- ensure that we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers (including members of the Governing Board and staff employed by another organisation) to work with children and young people in accordance with: the guidance given in: "Keeping Children Safe in Education," "The Education Act, 2002," "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023," and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage - 2021. See our school's 'Safer Recruitment Policy'.
- ensure that where staff from another organisation are working with our pupils on another site, we have received assurances that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to those staff.
- follow the local inter-agency procedures of the Hillingdon local authority and other SG partners
- be alert to signs of and early identification of abuse and neglect both in the School and from outside and to protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil.
- deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse and to support children who have been abused in accordance with the agreed child protection plan.
- design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations.

- be alert to the medical needs of children with medical conditions.
- operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures.
- teach pupils about safeguarding through the curriculum, RSE and PSHCE.
- take all practicable steps to ensure that the School premises are as secure as circumstances permit.
- consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual children in the School or in our local area; and
- have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education (DfE) in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and associated regulations.
- This policy is supported by Appendices 1- 3 as follows:
 - Appendix 1 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
 - Appendix 2 - Types and Indicators of abuse;
 - Appendix 3 - School e-safety agreement for children.
- The IT Acceptable Use Policy for Staff and Governors can be accessed via the school website in the staff secure area and Governor hub.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Key personnel:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection is:

Mrs H Slater – Assistant Headteacher

The Deputy Designated Leads are:

Mr K Oakley – Headteacher

Ms Sian Bridger – Assistant Headteacher

Mr Fergus McCloskey – Assistant Headteacher

The nominated governor for child protection (NGCP) is: Mrs Sophia Martin

All of the above can be contacted via email: office@botwellhouse.school or tel: 0208 573 2229

The Governing Board has an overarching role in ensuring that policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are effective and comply with the law at all times.

Designated Officer (LADO) & Lead CP Schools Adviser

Hannah Ives London Borough of Hillingdon 01895 277463

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The School has appointed a member of staff from the senior leadership team with the necessary status

and authority to undertake the role of the DSL and to be responsible for matters relating to child protection and welfare. This person is known as the DSL.

A requirement in KCSIE is for the DSL role to be clearly defined; and remunerated for; as part of the member of staff's job description and that he/she will receive designated supervision time.

The DSL shall be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings; contribute to the assessment of children; refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body; provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSL can be contacted out of school hours on the safeguarding mobile phone **07777 493916** or via her school email hslater@botwellhouse.school

Parents/Carers are welcome to approach the DSL if they have any concerns about the welfare of any child in the school. If preferred, parents may discuss concerns in private with the child's class teacher or the Headteacher who will notify the DSL in accordance with these procedures.

The main responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Appendix 1. If the DSL is unavailable, the role will be carried out by one of the Deputy DSLs. In this policy any reference to the DSL includes reference to the Deputy DSLs where the DSL is unavailable.

The DSL has undertaken Child Protection and Safeguarding training and training in inter-agency working, and will attend refresher training annually.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Are trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, one of the deputies will assume all of the functions above.

Duty of Employees, Governors and Volunteers:

Every employee and governor of our school, as well as every volunteer who assists our school, is under a general legal duty to:

- Protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Be aware of our school's child protection procedures and to follow them
- Know how to access and implement our school's child protection procedures, independently if necessary
- Keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event in accordance with this policy
- Report any matters of concern to the DSL
- Make an immediate referral to children's social care if there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- All staff will have training on and access to our online CP & SG management system 'CPOMS'
- All volunteers are interviewed, given INSET on SG & CP and have an Enhanced DBS check. Volunteers are also given a copy of Annex A from KCSIE and the school SG & CP Policy. Volunteers must confirm formally that they have read and understood these documents.
- Use the DfE's data protection guidance for schools to help you: comply with data protection law; develop data policies and processes; know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow

good practices for preventing personal data breaches

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct:

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care

Abuse of position of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence.

The governors ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practise of the Hillingdon local authority and our other SG partners.

The governing body has nominated a governor to liaise with the DSL in regards to all aspects of child protection and safeguarding, including to liaise with external agencies where this is required. Our Nominated Governor for Child Protection (NGCP) is Mrs Sophia Martin.

The Role of The Nominated Governor for Child Protection (NGCP):

- Liaise/meet with DSL on a termly basis
- Liaise with the Headteacher re: Child protection within the school
- Liaise with external agencies where this is required
- Provide anonymised information to the Governing Board

- Attend appropriate training for CP role
- Provide an annual CP report to the Governing Board
- Audit compliance to Safeguarding of Children and Safer Recruitment
- Provide supervision and support for the DSL

Training:

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection and safeguarding policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL.

All staff, including the DSL, Headteacher and governors will receive training that is updated at least annually. The DSL and Deputy DSLs will also complete specific level training every two years. In addition, all staff will receive INSET on 'on-line' internet safety. All staff may also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

All staff will be provided with:

- This policy
- The Staff Handbook, Internet & e-safety and Whistleblowing policies
- The identity of the DSL and deputies (Posters of this information will also be displayed in key areas for staff, volunteers, visitors, parents/carers and pupils)
- A copy of Parts 1 & 5 and Annex B of "Keeping Children Safe in Education"

The following are available on the staff secure area on the school website. The documents will be completed as part of the induction process for the staffs' personnel files.

- The IT Acceptable Use Policy for Staff and Governors

All staff, including the Headteacher, will receive, via the CPOMS system, a copy of this policy and Parts 1 & 5, and Annex B of "Keeping Children Safe in Education;" and all staff will be required to confirm that they have read and understood these documents, via the CPOMS system too.

All governors will receive, via the Governor Hub, a copy of this policy and Parts 1- 5, Annex B and Annex C of "Keeping Children Safe in Education;" and all governors will be required to confirm that they have read and understood these documents.

Procedures:

Children who may be particularly vulnerable:

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled
- have special educational needs (*see below*)
- young carers

- are 'looked after' or previously 'looked after'
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- living transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.
- frequently go missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- have experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

Children with special educational needs/children with disabilities:

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and children with disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in these groups of children, which can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN or disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

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

Children ‘Missing In Education’ or with ‘unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education’

A child going missing 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 particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of 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 system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families
- Are at risk of exploitation from CCE ‘County Lines’

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, neglect and exploitation, 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.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm, neglect or exploitation, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children’s social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Staffing:

Safer recruitment

Our school complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the local authority by carrying out the required checks, including an Enhanced DBS, and verifying the applicant’s identity, qualifications and work history. The school’s Safer Recruitment policy and procedures set out the process in full and can be found on the school website. Hard copies are also available via the school office.

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

All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under

eight) are made aware of the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check. (A section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor)

Volunteers

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school's day.

The school's safeguarding requirements must be set out in any contract between an organisation and the school. (KCSIE paragraphs 272-277)

Premises Lettings

The school must ensure the company letting the premises has appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to keep children safe. School has a statutory duty to look closely at the policies and procedures for SG & CP of the company/group letting the premises. This should be included in any lettings agreement. (KCSIE paragraphs 155-156)

Site security

Our school will take all practicable steps to ensure that the school premises are as secure as circumstances permit.

All visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in & out and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. A sheet detailing this information is given to them as they sign in. The Headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

The school has an Acceptable Use Policy for the use of school allocated cameras, iPads and mobile phones on the premises and for trips.

Staff/pupil online relationships

As part of their induction all staff have to read and sign the following: The IT Acceptable Use Policy for Staff and Governors (Available in the staff secure area on the school website and Governor Hub)

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

Staff use of mobile phones and cameras

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or lockers during contact time with pupils.

Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

- We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

Whistleblowing if you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing policy (given to all staff and on the school website) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Headteacher. Complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

Allegations against staff, and other staff, including supply teachers and volunteers

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

Governors reviewed, revised and ratified the school's 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers & other Staff' Policy.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education* and in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy and procedures.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

Pupils:

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is any conflict of interest between the child and the parent, the interests of the child must be paramount.

Normally we should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the family and where possible to seek their agreement to making a referral to Social Services if necessary. However, this will only be done when this will not place the child at increased risk. The child's views should also be taken into account.

Complaints of Abuse:

Every complaint or suspicion of abuse from within or outside the school will be taken seriously and

action taken in accordance with this policy.

If a member of staff is concerned that a pupil may be suffering harm, the matter should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible. If a member of staff suspects or hears a complaint of abuse, the procedures set out below must be followed. (*See below: Taking Action: If You Are Concerned about a Child's Welfare & If A Pupil Discloses To You*) If at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.

Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out in Appendix 2 along with indicators of abuse.

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our bullying & racism procedures and behaviour policy, available on our website.

Taking Action:

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- **do not** start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of notes on our CPOMS online system and share with DSL and any other relevant staff.
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If You Are Concerned About a Pupil's Welfare:

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should make notes to record these early concerns, recording them on CPOMS.

If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

All school staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance, staff should discuss early help requirements with the designated safeguarding lead. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals to assess the need for early help. (See the DSL for more detailed information on Hillingdon's 'Early Help: Stronger Families' – multi-agency approach)

If a Pupil Discloses To You:

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement.

During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely using TED (see right)
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil's mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves



- complete/record your notes (signed & dated) and hand it to the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying Parents:

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent/carer in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

Confidentiality and Sharing Information:

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Headteacher or Chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the school's GDPR policy using our online CPOMS system.

Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and where:

- it is necessary and proportionate to do so; and
- the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.

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

Any CP/SG paperwork, forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information on CPOMS which has a two level authentication process and only shared with relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately on CPOMS from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the data protection officer and DSL.

The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 **do not** prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

REMEMBER:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and pupils on request.

Referral to Children's Social Care:

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child. If a member of staff does this, they must notify the DSL as soon as possible.

On being notified of a complaint or suspicion of abuse, the action to be taken by the DSL will take into account:

- the local inter-agency procedures of the local authority
- the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to children's social care or the police
- the child's wishes or feelings and
- duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable.

If there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the DSL will consult with children's social care on a "no names" basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral to children's social care will be made without delay (and in any event within 24 hours)

If the initial referral is made by telephone, the DSL will confirm the referral in writing to children's social care within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgement is received within 3 working days, the DSL will contact children's social care again.

Reporting Directly to Child Protection Agencies:

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

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

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the Headteacher and the safeguarding governor are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Early Help

Early help is defined as: support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

Professionals should be alerted to the need for early help for children who:

- Frequently go missing/goes missing from education, home or care.
- Have experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

Child on Child Abuse:

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, all staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and should be clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding child on child. All child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. It is important that when staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse they should speak to their DSL'

Child on child abuse can take many forms, including:

- **physical abuse** such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- **sexually harmful behaviour /sexual abuse** such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault
- **sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery (sexting)** means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's Air Drop which works offline. It includes pressuring another person to send sexual imagery or video content.
- **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
- **initiation/hazing** - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports teams or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- **prejudiced behaviour** - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

When dealing with incidents staff must follow the School's Behaviour Policy and record the incident on CPOMS using the category of 'Bullying & Friendship Related Issues' and then the option 'child on child.'

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child on child abuse.

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- RE, RSE and PSHE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities.
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

Children with disabilities are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers.

All allegations of child on child abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately. They will then be investigated and dealt with as follows.

- **Information gathering** – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
- **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The DSL will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.
- **Inform parents** - as with other concerns of abuse, the school will normally seek to discuss concerns about a pupil with parents. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with the guidance set out in Part 5 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Serious Youth Violence

Serious Youth Violence includes the threat, and intentional use, of violence towards children under 18 years old. SYV usually occurs in a public place, it may or may not involve the use of weapons and can result in serious physical injury or death. Perpetrators may act alone, or as part of a group, SYV does not always happen in the context of gang activity. The intention of SYV is to cause significant injury, deprivation, psychological harm, or death.

Signs and Indicators: (this list is NOT exhaustive)

- Non-accidental or unexplained injuries including:
 - o Bruising
 - o Fractures
 - o Fresh scars or minor cuts
 - o Chronic pain (back, arms, upper legs)

- Suspicious injuries (appear to be inflicted by a bladed article, or inconsistent with the explanation).
- Refusing to be referred to a hospital or GP for further examination.
- Inconsistent explanation about how the injury was obtained.
- Becoming defensive, angry, or hostile when exploring the injury and sequence of events.

Supporting those involved

The support required for the pupil who has been harmed will depend on their circumstance and the nature of the abuse. Support could include counselling, mentoring, the support of family and friends and/or support with improving peer relationships or some restorative justice work.

Support may also be required for the pupil that harmed. We will seek to understand why the pupil acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the pupil and/or change behaviours. Once those needs have been met, the consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that 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. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they need to report to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Serious violence

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

Online Safety:

We recognise that online safety is the new 'frontline'.

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate material. The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation. We have ensured that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to manage the content available to pupils, who can contact our pupils and the personal conduct of our pupils online.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

content:

being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.

contact:

being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

conduct:

online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are

Sharing of Nude or Semi-nude Imagery (Sexting)

Is the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's Air Drop which works offline. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative language terms could be used by children to describe the imagery.

More detailed information can be found in the government guidance: [Sharing Nudes & Semi-nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children & Young People. \(December 2020\)](#)

All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery will be responded to as follows:

- The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the children/young people involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the child/young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a child/young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to **Children's Services** and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.

Staff Responsibilities:

You must **not**:

- View, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

Filtering and Monitoring

The school's filtering and monitoring system should:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.
- The school can use the department's <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-technology-for-your-school> to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Generative AI:

The Department has published Generative AI: product safety expectations to support schools to use generative artificial intelligence safely, and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education.

Generative AI products must:

- effectively and reliably prevent access to harmful and inappropriate content by users;
- maintain robust activity logs, either by the Generative AI product itself or additional technology;
- be secured against malicious use or expose to harm;
- prioritise transparency and child safety in its design and be operated with accountability; and
- respect data protection and intellectual property laws.

Domestic Abuse:

The cross-government definition of domestic abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can

encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Upskirting:

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

Sexual Exploitation of Children:

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

The school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHCE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL.

Honour-Based Violence:

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

FGM (Female Genital Mutilation):

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

Forced Marriage:

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Breast Ironing:

What is breast ironing? It is practised in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breast to stop them growing further. In the vast majority of cases breast ironing is carried out by mothers or grandmothers and the men in the family are unaware. Estimates range between 25% and 50% of girls in Cameroon are affected by breast ironing, affecting up to 3.8 million women across Africa.

Why does breast ironing happen?

The practice of breast ironing is seen as a protection to girls by making them seem 'child-like' for longer and reduce the likelihood of pregnancy. Once girls' breasts have developed, they are at risk of sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage and kidnapping; consequently, breast ironing is more prevalent in cities. Cameroon has one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa and ensuring that girls remain in education is seen as an important outcome of breast ironing.

Breast ironing is physical abuse.

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

Breast ironing does not stop the breasts from growing, but development can be slowed down. Damage caused by the 'ironing' can leave women with malformed breasts, difficulty breastfeeding or producing milk, severe chest pains, infections and abscesses. In some cases, it may be related to the onset of breast cancer.

Child Criminal Exploitation – 'County Lines':

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Schools should be aware of children who:

- are missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from their own
- have been the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), as well as the victim

Radicalisation and Extremism:

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receive training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values.

Reporting radicalisation concerns:

If staff have concerns of radicalisation, they need to inform the DSL who will make a referral to the Channel Helpline on 020 7340 7264. They can also contact the ACT Early Support Line, in confidence, on 0800 011 3764 and speak with specially trained officers. The support line is open 9am to 5pm every day.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

- Caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition
- Children may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children
- **The DfE will produce revised guidance on gender questioning children in the near future**

The school should take a cautious approach to support a gender questioning child and:

- Consider the broad range of the individual's needs
- Do this in partnership with their parents (except in rare circumstances where involving parents would bring a significant risk of harm to the child)
- Include any clinical advice that is available
- Consider how to address wider vulnerabilities, such as the risk of bullying

It's also important for staff to 'create a culture' where pupils can speak out or share any concerns with staff

Private Fostering Arrangements:

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Related Safeguarding Policies:

This policy should be read alongside other school policies which relate to safeguarding: Safer Recruitment, Whistleblowing (Raising Concerns), Allegations Against Staff, Welfare, Inclusion, e-Safety, iPad Acceptable Use for Staff, IT Computing Systems Acceptable Use, Staff Handbook, PSHCE, RSE, RE, Equalities, Behaviour, Bullying & Racism, Health & Safety, Trips & Risk Assessments.

Special Circumstances:

Children Looked After (CLA)

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children is the DSL and has details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

Monitoring:

Any child protection incidents at the school will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the school and a report to governors. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the designated officer will assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the school's procedures.

In addition, the DSL & NGCP will ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and its procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, working with other governors as necessary.

The governors will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to child protection arrangements at any time are remedied without delay.

Low Level Concerns KCSIE states that, as part of our whole school approach to safeguarding schools in England should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which **any concerns** about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately. The term 'Low Level Concerns' does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adults' behaviour towards a child does not meet the thresholds within the 'Whistle Blowing Policy'. Low Level Concerns, for example, could be a nagging doubt that an adult may have acted or spoken in a way that you feel is inappropriate, or acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, being over familiar/friendly with children etc and therefore must be raised with the Headteacher verbally/in writing. The Headteacher has a statutory duty to keep a log of all 'Low Level Concerns' raised. Staff must also read the school's Whistle Blowing Policy.

"All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team." (Para 75: KCSIE)

"Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's leadership team." (Para 76: KCSIE)

"Where a staff member feels unable to raise the issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being address, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them." (Para 77: KCSIE) These include the local authority, NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline and Ofsted. General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Advice on Whistleblowing](#)

Conclusion:

In adhering to this policy we will fulfil our Child Protection Rationale that: "We at Botwell House Catholic Primary School will safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and protect them from any form of abuse."

Contacts:

The details of the **Designated Officer (LADO) & Lead CP Schools Adviser** are as follows:

Hannah Ives: London Borough of Hillingdon **01895 277463**

Hillingdon Safeguarding - Children & Young People's SG Board -	
Business Manager – Andrea Nixon	01895 277260
Hillingdon Children's Services & Social Care	01895 556633
Hillingdon Stronger families Hub	01895 556006
Channel Helpline	020 7340 7264
Childline	0800 1111
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (8:00am – 8:00pm)	0800 028 0285 (Mon-Friday)
Or Email:	help@nspcc.org.uk
Ofsted's Whistleblowing Hotline	0300 123 3155

Appendix 1 - Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school. The DSL has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, which include:

- ensuring the child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by staff, reviewed annually and publically available
- advising and supporting staff on child protection and safeguarding matters
- encouraging a culture of listening to children
- managing safeguarding referrals to children’s social care, the police, or other agencies
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings
- liaising with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the local authority where allegations are made against staff
- making staff aware of local training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements
- transferring the child protection file to a child’s new school
- undergoing training and receiving regular updates to maintain the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role, including Prevent awareness training

Other responsibilities of the DSL are to:

- Be the first point of contact for parents/carers, pupils, staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection and to provide support, advice and expertise on all matters concerning safeguarding
- Ensure that all members of staff and volunteers receive the appropriate training on child protection and safer recruitment procedures and to keep and maintain records of this training
- Advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to her
- Liaise with the designated officer, children’s social care and other external agencies on behalf of the school, including the police and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- To keep the Headteacher informed of all actions unless the Headteacher is the subject of a complaint
- Monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection.
- Monitor records of pupils in the school who are subject to a child protection plan to ensure that this is maintained and updated as notification is received
- Liaise with other professionals to ensure that children who are subject to child protection plans are monitored and to take part in child protection conferences, reviews and ‘Child in Need’ meetings
- Liaise with the NGCP on, at least, a termly basis
- Provide information to governors on CP, including an annual report on the numbers of incidents/cases within the school
- **The DSL should keep written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions, including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children’s social care or the Prevent program**

If the DSL is unavailable then the DDSLs/Headteacher will carry out this role.

The following is taken from Annex C of “Keeping Children Safe in Education” which sets out the broad areas of responsibility for the DSL

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- *refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children’s social care as required;*
- *support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care;*
- *refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;*
- *support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;*

- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff;
- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- liaise with the Headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member); and
- liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically;
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and the Mental Health Support Team where SG concerns are linked to mental health;
- Promote supportive engagement with parents/carers in SG and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.

Raising Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure the school or college’s child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the school or college’s child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this; and
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.

The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these

- effectively when required to do so;*
- *ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;*
 - *are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;*
 - *understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation*
 - *understand the importance of information sharing, both within school and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.*
 - *are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;*
 - *understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;*
 - *are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school*
 - *can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, e.g. from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online*
 - *obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and*
 - *encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.*

Appendix 2 – Types and Indicators of Abuse:

“Keeping Children Safe in Education” paragraphs 20 – 54 give detailed information on Abuse and Neglect including:

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect. Knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect (paragraphs 26-30) and specific SG issues such as child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE) (paragraphs 32-39) so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL.

All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with their DSL.

All staff should be aware that SG incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many SG and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face.

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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or

technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

"Keeping Children Safe in Education" paragraphs 27 - 30 defines the following **four categories** of abuse:

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education – Child on Child Abuse. See "Keeping Children Safe In Education" paragraphs 29 & 30.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Annex B of "Keeping Children Safe in Education" contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. This section is also given to staff and governors.

Indicators of Abuse:

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'.

It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

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

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

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

Appendix 3 – School e-safety Agreement for Children:

e-safety

- I will only use ICT in school for school purposes
- I will not tell other people my ICT passwords
- I will open/delete my own files
- I will make sure that all ICT contact with other children and adults is responsible, polite and sensible
- I will not deliberately look for, save or send anything that could be unpleasant, nasty or inappropriate. If I accidentally find anything like this I will tell my teacher immediately
- I will not give out my own details such as my name, phone number or home address. I will not arrange to meet someone unless this is part of a school project approved by my teacher and a responsible adult comes with me
- I will be responsible for my behaviour when using ICT because I know that these rules are to keep me safe
- I know that my use of ICT can be checked and that my parent/carer contacted if a member of school staff is concerned about my e-safety
- I will also follow these rules at home when using the computer/internet/other electronic devices
- I will not open an attachment, or download a file unless I know and trust the person who has sent it
- I am aware that websites and social networks have age restrictions and I will respect this
- I will not bring files into school without permission, or upload inappropriate material to my work space

Signed: _____ (Pupil name)

Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer name)

