

Helsby Hillside Primary School

Schools Safeguarding Policy Framework for Children and Young People



With kindness, respect and gratitude,
together we aim high in all we do.

Using this document

This document provides a framework on which to base your school's safeguarding policy.

It is important that schools do not simply adopt a policy but ensure that it is:

- ***personalised to meet the needs of their school***
- ***reflective of the culture, ethos, resources and structures***
- ***is a working document***
- ***owned by all members of the school community***
- ***fully implemented***
- ***'tested'***
- ***subject to annual review or when changes in policy or procedures occur, whichever is soonest***

Disclaimer: The Safeguarding Children in Education (SCiE) team makes every effort to ensure that the information in this document is accurate and up to date. If errors are brought to our attention, we will correct them as soon as practicable. By using the model policy framework, you agree with its contents and have checked that it replicates your safeguarding processes in your setting and made amendments if applicable.

Written by:	SCiE Team and reviewed/Edited by A Khan, Headteacher
Policy reviewed	Autumn 2026
Next reviewed date	Autumn 2027

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Education Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Key Personnel

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*/**	Adam Khan, Headteacher	head@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk	01928 722991
Deputy DSL(s)*/**	Steven Caldwell, Deputy Headteacher	deputyhead@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk	01928722991
Headteacher*	Adam Khan	head@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk	01928 722991
Chair of Governors*	Jo Taylor	chair@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk	NA
Safeguarding Governor/Trustee	Helen Taylor	htaylor@hillside.cheshire.sch.uk	NA

**Out of hours contact details will be made available to staff*

***Any changes to key personnel/holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies and LA safeguarding boards/hubs*

Contents

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY	
Subject	Page
Safeguarding Statement	4
Terminology	4
Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance	5
Policy Principles, Aims and Values	5
Safe Environment	8
Roles and Responsibilities	8
Confidentiality	12
Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns	12
Early Intervention, Prevention and Family Help	16
Children Who Are Particularly Vulnerable	17
Whistleblowing	18
Allegations Against Staff	19
Physical Intervention	20
Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Record Keeping	21

Photographing children	22
Complaints and Compliments	23
Additional information for parents	23
Policy Links	23
APPENDICES	
App 1. Categories of Abuse	24
App 2. Anti-Bullying / Cyberbullying	29
App 3. Racist Incidents	29
App 4. Radicalisation and Extremism	30
App 5. Domestic Abuse (including Operation Encompass)	32
App 6. Exploitation (including CSE, CCE and County Lines)	33
App 7. Female Genital Mutilation	36
App 8. Forced Marriage	38
App 9. Honour Based Abuse	38
App 10. One Chance Rule	38
App 11. Mental Health	39
App 12. Private Fostering Arrangements	39
App 13. Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children	40
App 14. Children Missing Education	40
App 15. Attendance and Safeguarding	40
App 16. Behaviour, Suspension and Exclusion	42
App 17. Elective Home Education	44
App 18. Child on Child Abuse (incl. Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and HSB)	45
App 19. Online Safety, filtering and monitoring	48
App 20. Youth Produced Sexual Imagery	51
App 21. Additional Resources	52
App 22. Safeguarding – Key Points	53
App 23. Essential contacts	54
App 24. Assessment triangle	55
App 25. Roles and responsibilities of single point of contact (radicalisation and extremism)	56
App 26. Transfer of Records	57
App 27. Addition for schools with EYFS, Nursery and Wraparound care	58

Safeguarding Statement

Helsby Hillside Primary School recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and expects all staff, governors, and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or SEND have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse. 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. We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern. When there are concerns for a child's welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies. Where appropriate, the school will be open and transparent with children, parents and carers about safeguarding concerns and information sharing. However, when necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child, information may be shared with relevant agencies without prior discussion or agreement if seeking consent, or informing a parent/carer, could place a child at risk, prejudice support, protection or assessment processes, or otherwise be contrary to the child's welfare. This Child Protection and Safeguarding policy underpins and guides our safeguarding procedures and protocols.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children)

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

Child means anyone under the age of 18. References to care leavers will be considered in accordance with relevant statutory guidance

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, adoptive parents and LA corporate parents.

Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and reflects the school's commitment to implementing updated statutory safeguarding expectations including online safety, emerging technologies, Family Help, child-on-child abuse prevention, safeguarding children who may be questioning their gender, violence against women and girls, safer recruitment and information-sharing duties.

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education:](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)
- [Education Act 2002 Section 175 \(maintained schools only\)](#)
- [Education Act 2002 Section 157 \(Independent schools incl Academies and CTC's\)](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Teachers' Standards guidance](#)
- [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#)
- [Filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges \(DfE\)](#)
- Information Sharing duty
- [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK](#)
- [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#)
- [Children's social care national framework - GOV.UK](#)
- [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)
- [UN Convention on Rights of a Child \(UNCRC\) - UNICEF UK](#)
- [Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff Feb 2024](#)
- [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK](#)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK](#)
- [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026: policy summary - GOV.UK](#)
- [Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Act 2025: Scope \(Premises\) - GOV.UK](#)
- [How Martyn's Law will affect education settings - GOV.UK](#)

Policy Principles, Aims and Values

The welfare of the child is paramount:

- All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.

- We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors, all have a duty to protect our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.

This policy aims to:

- Raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children.
- Provide all staff with guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child/young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing, harm. Including (by DSL/DDSL) consideration to the use of appropriate assessments, resources and agency support.
- Provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and that they will be listened to should they make a disclosure.
- Raise awareness that abuse can be both Familial and/or Contextual; and abusers can be both adult/s to child/ren or child/ren to child/ren.
- Demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
- Provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To emphasise the need for high levels of communication between staff and the designated safeguarding leads internally and with external agencies and partners, including our contribution to assessments, referrals, and support plans.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other partnership agencies, particularly Children's Social Care, Police and Health.
- Support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- Ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance)², and a single central record is kept for audit.
- Provide clarity and expectations on professional behaviours and code of conduct including lone working requirements.

Supporting and Protecting Children:

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses' violence may feel helpless and humiliated and could experience barriers to making a disclosure. We understand that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems. We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour, and education from familial and/or contextual abuse. School may not only provide stability in

¹ Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc. and governors.

² Guidance regarding DBS checks recently updated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm, but it plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children.

Our school will support all children by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying (incl. cyber bullying).
- promoting a caring, safe, and positive environment within the school and providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress and anxiety.
- offering details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support.
- liaising and working together with all other settings, support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- notifying Children's Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- ensuring appropriate information is shared confidentially at key transition points in a child's journey to ensure continuous support (incl. school medical records).
- children are taught to understand and manage risk through our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and through all aspects of school life. This includes online safety.
- by accessing and utilising the necessary resources, guidance and toolkits to support the identification of children requiring mental health support, support services and assessments.
- reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

The school community will protect children by:

- working to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- ensuring that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- including regular consultation with children, parents, and staff, gathering their voice.
- including safeguarding across the curriculum to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; in particular this will include anti-bullying work, information about child on child abuse (sexual harassment and sexual violence, consent), online-safety, road safety, and cycle training; provide focussed activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages.
- ensuring all staff, pupils and parents are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies, including the use of social media and their associated risks.
- implementing clear expectations regarding the safe and responsible use of mobile phones and personal devices. The school adopts a phone-free approach during the school day unless specific educational, medical or safeguarding reasons require otherwise.

Safe environment

The school is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and young people, identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with families and other agencies. This policy reflects the policies of Cheshire West's Safeguarding Children Partnership, [Cheshire West SCP](#) and is in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

The school will also contribute through the curriculum by developing children's understanding, awareness and promoting their resilience by providing a safe environment within schools.

Roles and Responsibilities

We will follow the statutory guidance as set out in the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (and associated documents and guidance), adhering to the roles, responsibilities and expectations identified for:

- Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees.
- The headteacher
- The designated safeguarding lead.
- The deputy designated safeguarding lead/s
- Staff

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Governing bodies, proprietors, and management committees:

All members of The Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely, to ensure that there is a Child Protection and Safeguarding policy together with a Staff Behaviour policy (Code of Conduct).

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

Roles and responsibilities will include ensuring:

- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with the Local Authority and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publicly available on the school website or by other means.
- All staff including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and staff Code of Conduct and asked to sign an annual declaration.

- The Governing Body will ensure that all staff, including volunteers and those who do not work directly with children, read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education annually and receive safeguarding updates throughout the year.
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff, disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school complies with KCSIE safer recruitment requirements including identity checks, qualifications, references, online searches on shortlisted candidates, prohibition checks, section 128 direction checks where applicable, DBS checks and appropriate checks on agency and contractor staff
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), supply staff, volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.
- A member of the Governing Body/Board, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Governing Body/Board who will take lead responsibility.
- On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by the Cheshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership every two years.
- All other staff undertake safeguarding training every 3 years and an update at least annually.
- At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues to meet their needs, including children who have recognised vulnerabilities.
- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing (are absent) from education.
- Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Enhanced DBS checks at the appropriate level are in place for all Governors.
- Any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.

The Headteacher:

The Headteacher will support the governing body, designated safeguarding lead, deputies, staff and volunteers to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Ensuring the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Enabling sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy(ies) DSL(s) to carry out their roles effectively,
- Supporting and promoting an open and positive safeguarding culture and ethos in school so that child/ren's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensuring systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback.

- Following the whistleblowing policy and procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer staff, including liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and referring anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- That pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. (They must be a member of SLT).

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Availability – being available during school hours.
- Manage referrals – to e.g., Children's Social Care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring service, the Police.
- Working with others – e.g., a point of contact with safeguarding partners, a source of support and advice for staff, to promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers and the SLT/Governing body.
- Information sharing and managing the child protection/safeguarding files.
- Raising Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness.
- Updating training, knowledge and skills required to carry out the role of DSL e.g., additional training such as neglect, exploitation etc.
- Providing support to staff.
- Holding and sharing information.
- Overseeing and acting upon filtering and monitoring reports and checks to these systems.
- Ensure compliance with statutory information-sharing responsibilities, promoting a culture of timely, lawful and effective multi-agency information sharing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DDSL):

Is/ are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Staff:

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- identifying concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare, and prevent concerns from escalating.

- to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- knowing what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
- being able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- recognising the barriers for children when wanting to make a disclosure (verbal or non-verbal).
- identifying children who may benefit from early help, (providing support as soon as a problem emerges) and the part they play in these support plans.
- raising any concerns for a child following the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- being aware of local authority referral processes and supporting social workers and other agencies following any referral.
- adhering to Teachers' Standards - that teacher (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Being aware of systems within school which support safeguarding e.g., safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, code of conduct, CME, online filtering, and monitoring.
- Attending regular safeguarding and child protection training.
- Recognising that children missing or absent from education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.
- All staff will demonstrate professional curiosity, respectfully seeking to understand the lived experience of children and families and exploring concerns rather than accepting explanations at face value.

Volunteers

The school recognises that safeguarding responsibilities apply equally to volunteers working with children.

All recruitment and suitability decisions relating to volunteers will be undertaken in accordance with statutory safeguarding requirements and safer recruitment procedures.

The school will:

- assess the nature of the role undertaken by volunteers;
- obtain references and conduct risk assessments where appropriate;
- undertake identity checks;
- ensure appropriate enhanced DBS checks are completed;
- ensure barred list checks are undertaken where required for regulated activity;
- maintain appropriate records of safeguarding checks.

Volunteers will receive safeguarding induction, understand their safeguarding responsibilities and be aware of the identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs.

Volunteers will be expected to follow the school's safeguarding, staff conduct, online safety and whistleblowing procedures at all times.

Confidentiality

Our school recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm, the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018³ is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.

The school will be open and transparent with parents/carers wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so. However, information may be shared with I-ART, Children's Social Care, Family Help services, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies without seeking consent where this is necessary to safeguard or promote a child's welfare, support assessment or decision-making, protect the child from harm, or fulfil statutory safeguarding responsibilities. Decisions and the rationale for sharing information will be appropriately recorded.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, all children's safeguarding files will be kept confidential and stored securely. Safeguarding records are held in CPOMS.

Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Recognising:

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"**. We also recognise that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

- Abuse and neglect are forms 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 the 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

³ The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
[Data Protection in Schools Gov.UK DfE Feb 2023](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-in-schools)

- Abuse and Neglect may also take place outside of the home, contextual safeguarding, and this may include (but not limited to), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence and/or radicalisation.
- Staff are aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse.
- There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.
- We recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.
- In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Further information on the different types of safeguarding concerns and schools' response can be found in the Appendices section.

Responding:

Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing, see FLOW CHART.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice in FLOW CHART and in the table below 'pupil making a disclosure'.

All concerns however small must be recorded and shared with the DSL as this information could provide the 'missing' piece of the bigger picture of the lived experience for the child.

1. Offer reassurance, listen and take seriously what is being said. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the child, young person or their family not to take action.



2. Recognise that it is not your job to investigate, verify what is being said or examine the individual disclosing; this is the statutory responsibility of the child protection services and/or the Police.
However, it is important to ascertain relevant information.



3. Explain the process to the individual; that you will need to pass this information on, to whom, the reasons why and possible actions.



4. Any concerns will be recorded , including the child's voice, body map (if necessary) and other relevant information in line with our school's recording procedure. Concerns may also be shared with the DSL/DDSL verbally, these conversations will also be recorded in writing

Different types of safeguarding concerns and risks to children

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• child missing or absent from education.• child missing from home or care.• child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE)• bullying including cyberbullying• domestic abuse• drugs• fabricated or induced illness• faith abuse• female genital mutilation (FGM)• forced marriage.• gangs and youth violence | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)• mental health difficulties• private fostering• radicalisation• youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)• teenage relationship abuse• trafficking• child on child abuse• up skirting• serious violence• sexual harassment |
|---|--|

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff

- We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that

what has happened is their fault. Sometimes, they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

- A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the pupil staff will:

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and not overreact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk.
- take what the child is disclosing seriously.
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions.
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations.
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong.
- tell the child what will happen next, that they cannot keep secrets and that information will be shared to ensure the right level of support is given.

Notifying Parents

- The school will normally seek to discuss concerns with parents/carers where appropriate and in the child's best interests. However, information may be shared, referrals made, or safeguarding action taken without parental agreement when necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child, support assessment or decision-making, or where seeking consent could increase risk, delay intervention, compromise professional enquiry or prejudice a safeguarding investigation. This must be handled sensitively and normally the DSL/DDSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure of abuse that the child has been harmed in some way.
- However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, I-ART will be contacted first e.g., familial sexual abuse.
- Where there are concerns about FGM, forced marriage or so-called honour-based abuse, parents should not be informed a referral is being made, as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk.

Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to I-ART or other support is appropriate in accordance with the SCP's Providing the right support at the right time (Continuum of Need) thresholds framework. [Chester West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership - Providing the Right Support at the Right Time](#)

- If school are uncertain about whether a concern raised should be referred to I-ART, a consultation will be sought with the Local Authority SCIE team to seek further support and guidance.
- If a referral is needed, the DSL should make this rapidly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can, and should, consider making a referral themselves.
- The school will seek to be transparent with children and parents/carers about referrals wherever appropriate. However, referrals may be made, and information shared, without prior notification where necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child, where there are concerns about risk, or where informing those involved could prejudice safeguarding processes or multi-agency decision-making.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves (using the escalation and resolution policy).
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to I-ART and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.
- Decisions will be informed by the wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child and these will be clearly recorded within safeguarding processes.

Supporting our Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

Early Intervention, Prevention and Family Help

Providing help and support as soon as problems emerge is a key safeguarding responsibility for all staff. The school recognises that safeguarding is most effective when concerns are identified early and children receive the right support at the right time.

The school operates within the Cheshire West and Chester **Right Support at the Right Time** framework and understands that children and families may require differing levels of support as their needs change.

When concerns are identified, the DSL will consider whether a child requires:

Community Services

Support available through universal services including education, health services, family hubs, early years provision, community organisations and voluntary sector services.

Family Help

Where emerging needs, additional vulnerabilities or multiple concerns are identified, children and families may benefit from coordinated Family Help support. This may include multi-agency planning, a Lead Practitioner, Family Network Meetings and targeted interventions designed to prevent concerns from escalating.

Keeping Children Safe and Well

Where concerns indicate that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, statutory safeguarding and child protection procedures will be implemented immediately. Family Help and Child Protection operate as one integrated system to ensure children receive both support and protection according to their needs.

All staff should remain professionally curious and alert to changes in a child's circumstances, presentation, attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing or vulnerability. Decisions will be informed by the child's lived experience, wishes and feelings, family circumstances, strengths and protective factors, alongside professional judgement and local threshold guidance.

The level of support provided will always be based on the child's current needs, with the aim of ensuring they receive the right support, at the right time, from the right person.

Children who are particularly vulnerable

Helsby Hillside Primary School recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and contextual safeguarding concerns and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children. We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances.

In some cases, possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs, or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.

Some children may also find it harder to disclose abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

The school recognises that some children may have medical conditions, including severe allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or other health needs, which require additional planning, support and risk management to ensure their safety and wellbeing in school. While these children may require individual healthcare arrangements and consideration of their needs, the presence of a medical condition alone does not mean that a child is at increased risk of abuse or neglect. Staff should, however, remain alert to situations where a child's medical needs are not being appropriately met, as this may indicate a wider welfare or safeguarding concern.

Any child may benefit from early help, Family Help or statutory intervention, but school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who

- is disabled or has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan).
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing from home, care or education.
- is at risk of, or is experiencing, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) or other forms of exploitation.
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- is experiencing family difficulties, including parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse, substance misuse or housing instability.
- is experiencing mental health difficulties, emotional distress or wellbeing concerns.
- is vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influences.
- is privately fostered.
- has returned home from care.
- is persistently absent from education or is at risk of suspension, permanent exclusion or placement breakdown.
- is experiencing bullying, prejudice-based incidents, discrimination or hate-related abuse.
- is questioning their gender and experiencing additional vulnerabilities or safeguarding risks.
- has experienced abuse, neglect, adverse childhood experiences or trauma.
- is subject to repeated suspensions or is at risk of permanent exclusion.
- attends alternative provision or has experienced placement breakdowns.
- demonstrates behaviour that may indicate unmet safeguarding, mental health or SEND needs.

The school expects all staff to exercise professional curiosity and share information proactively. Information relevant to a child's safety, welfare or wellbeing should be shared with appropriate professionals without unnecessary delay, and where necessary without consent, in accordance with statutory safeguarding duties. Practitioners should not work in isolation or make decisions based solely on individual pieces of information but should contribute to a shared understanding of a child's lived experience through effective multi-agency communication and information sharing.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing in relation to staff, agency staff and volunteers, should be raised with the Headteacher, and if the concerns are about the Headteacher, these should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body, whose contact details are readily available to staff. A Whistle Blowing Policy is available to all staff to read.

(N.B. - The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk)

Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction⁴.

In line with KCSiE part 4 guidelines, the school has procedures for recording, managing and reviewing low-level concerns.

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision.

Staff, parents, and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing including content placed on social media sites.

School will ensure that pupils are aware of how they can raise a concern should they be worried about a member of staffs conduct, this may be for example by talking to a trusted adult.

⁴ Refer to “Guidance for Safe Working Practice”

1. All employees and volunteers must record in writing, any concerns they have about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff and share it with the Headteacher (or equivalent senior member of staff).



2. The Headteacher will make an assessment to determine if the matter is a 'low level concern' or an 'allegation' (this means that the concern may meet the harm threshold).



3. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted for all 'allegations' and the relevant guidance will be followed. If the Headteacher needs advice or guidance they should contact the LADO. If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO or Chair of Governors directly.



4. Where concerns are considered to be 'low level' by the Headteacher, they should be managed in-line with part 4 of KCSiE and the wider school policies and procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead may be involved in this process.



5. If the concern relates to the Headteacher, the person receiving the information will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying the Headteacher first. [NB where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school the concerns should be reported directly to the LADO].



6. In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice from the LADO.

Physical Intervention

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff have been given 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

Confidentiality, Sharing Information and Record Keeping

The school recognises that consent is not a prerequisite for safeguarding information sharing. While practitioners should be open and transparent where appropriate, the Information Sharing Duty requires relevant information to be shared when necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. The absence of consent must not prevent lawful and proportionate information sharing.

Effective safeguarding relies on timely, appropriate and secure information sharing. All staff should be proactive in sharing information to identify, assess and respond to concerns about the safety and welfare of children at the earliest opportunity.

All staff must understand that:

- safeguarding concerns should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.
- fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of protecting a child.
- the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.
- children must never be promised confidentiality where a safeguarding concern exists.
- information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and with those professionals who require it to safeguard the child.
- Consent is not required for safeguarding information sharing where there is a legal or statutory basis to share information in order to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Practitioners should not delay sharing information if doing so could place a child at risk or prevent children and families receiving appropriate help and support.

The school will normally seek to discuss concerns with parents/carers before making a referral. However, this will not happen where doing so could:

- place a child at increased risk of harm;
- compromise a criminal investigation; or
- prejudice a safeguarding enquiry.

All safeguarding records will:

- be accurate, factual and contemporaneous;
- clearly record concerns, actions taken, decisions reached and outcomes;
- be stored securely and separately from the main pupil file;
- be accessed only by authorised personnel; and
- transfer securely to a new setting within statutory timescales when a child leaves the school.

Information sharing will always be:

- necessary and proportionate;
- relevant;
- adequate;
- accurate;
- timely; and
- secure.

At the point a child formally transfers to their new setting, their safeguarding file will be transferred securely in line with GDPR expectations as soon as possible, but within 5 working days.

Information Sharing Duty

The school recognises that effective safeguarding depends upon timely, accurate and proactive information sharing between practitioners and agencies. In accordance with the statutory Information Sharing Duty, staff should share relevant information with safeguarding partners and other appropriate agencies where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

Staff should not assume that information can only be shared when a child is at risk of significant harm or subject to statutory intervention. Information may need to be shared at an earlier stage to support prevention, early intervention, assessment and decision-making. Where a practitioner holds information that may be relevant to safeguarding or promoting a child's welfare, they should ensure that it is shared appropriately, proportionately, securely and without unnecessary delay.

Concerns about consent or confidentiality must not prevent the sharing of information where doing so is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Practitioners should not seek consent where doing so would be inappropriate, unsafe, likely to cause delay, or undermine safeguarding activity. The absence of consent must not prevent lawful and proportionate safeguarding information sharing. Decisions to share, or not share, information should be clearly recorded, together with the rationale for those decisions

Photographing Children

Helsby Hillside Primary School will ensure that images of children used within publications, publicity and on the website has written parental consent prior to any images being taken and used. This consent will be obtained in line with school's data collection process.

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We acknowledge, however, that some people abuse children through taking, using or circulating images.

Staff and Volunteers

- Parental consent will be sought when child starts school and permissions noted, they may be changed upon written confirmation of the parent.
- Staff and volunteers must seek the authorisation of the Head Teacher prior to taking photographs/ videos of children and must only use school equipment unless given specific authorisation by the Head Teacher.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones or the downloading of images onto any internet site is forbidden, with the exception of the school website and unless consent from parent has been obtained.
- Only the pupil's first name will be used with an image
- It will be ensured that pupils are appropriately dressed before images are taken
- Pupils are encouraged to tell us if they are worried or unsure about any photographs that are taken of them.

The Guidance for Safer working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People provides detailed guidance on the taking of photographs and storage of images.

Parents or Members of the Public

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school production, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.

However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this (e.g. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, causing an accident), we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow other people, including staff, to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without parental permission. This includes the use of cameras on mobile phones or any other device.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, including social networking sites, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

The school cannot, however, be held accountable for the use of photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions where parental permission has been given.

Complaints and Compliments

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff e.g. the Headteacher and Governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in our complaints procedure available on the website.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's Complaints, Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

Additional information for parents

Contact arrangements and Parental responsibility

We recognise that a relationship breakdown can be very distressing for all involved, however, any contact arrangements must be agreed outside of school and school should not be put in a position where they are placed in the middle of contact disputes. We aim to make the school environment a calm and safe place for your children, as well as the whole school community, and would be unable to do this if we are placed at the centre of disputes. School is also unable to prevent anyone with parental responsibility (PR) from picking up a child from school unless there is a court order in place stating that the person with PR is not allowed to do so, although the school will attempt to seek permission from the primary carer before releasing the child.

Policy Links

This policy also links to our school policies available on our website
[Helsby Hillside Primary School: Policies](#)

End of Policy for website publication