



Safeguarding, Child Protection and Family Help Policy

Aiming High Together

If you have concerns about a child who lives in **Wigan** contact:

Monday to Sunday 24 hours: 01942 828300

Or you can make a referral electronically.

Remember, in an emergency please ring **999**

School Name:	Lowton West Primary School
Policy reviewed by:	A. Higgins, N. Gould
Policy agreed:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2027

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Key Contacts

Table of identified persons with specific lead responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding and other key agencies.

Key Safeguarding Personnel			
Role	Name	Telephone	Email
Acting Head teacher	Mrs. N Gould	01942 724865	enquiries@admin.lowtonwest.wigan.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs. N Gould	01942 724865	enquiries@admin.lowtonwest.wigan.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Mrs A Higgins Pastoral/ Safeguarding Manager Mrs V Redfern Assistant Head Mrs L McIntyre Assistant Head	01942 724865	enquiries@admin.lowtonwest.wigan.sch.uk
Nominated Governor/Trustee	Dr. G. Merrett	N/A	
Chair of Governors/Trustees	Dr. G. Merrett	N/A	
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	Mrs N. Gould	01942 724865	enquiries@admin.lowtonwest.wigan.sch.uk
The key safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles above are set out in <u>Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2025)</u>			
Agency Contact Details			
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Heather Martin	01942 486042	lado@wigan.gov.uk
Virtual School Head	Charmaine Tarring Michelle Amberry	Virtual School Head Virtual Head team leader	admin.virtualschool@wigan.gov.uk
Children's First Partnership Hub	Early Help/ Children's Social Care	01942 828300	Professional referrals - for children
Family Hub		01942 828377	Lowton Community Hub

Wigan Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP)		01942 486025	wscb@wigan.gov.uk
Service Manager – Inclusion & Education Safeguarding Lead	Sian O'Brien		s.obrien4@wigan.gov.uk
CAMHS Link worker	Helen Clucas	01942 775 400	Ashton, Lowton and Golborne Footprint Wigan CAMHS 155 - 157 Manchester RdInce WIGAN LANCASHIRE WN2 2JA
School Nursing / Health Visiting service		01942 483 558	Lowton, Golborne and Leigh Team
DfE's Counter- Extremism Division		020 7340 7264	Mon-Fri 11am-3pm counter.extremism@education.gov.uk
School Attendance Lead (Wigan)	Nathan Jones		AttendanceServiceA&G@wigan.gov.uk
Team Manager – Pupil Inclusion	Taylor Davidson		PupilInclusion@wigan.gov.uk
Manager – EHE, CME and Off-Roll	Sarah Arnold		Elective Home Education – ehe@wigan.gov.uk Children Missing Education cme@wigan.gov.uk Off-Roll OffRoll@wigan.gov.uk

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to Sunday 24 hours: 01942 828300**

Or you can make a referral electronically.

Remember in an emergency please ring 999

If you believe a child or young person is **at immediate risk** of significant harm or injury,
contact the **Police on 999**

Definitions

Safeguarding is defined as:

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

Child Protection refers to the situation where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, and action is required to protect that child.

The Purpose of this Policy and Procedure document

The purpose of this policy is to provide absolute clarity for all staff at Lowton West Primary School on our shared responsibilities in safeguarding our pupils. This Policy and procedure document aims to help professionals understand what they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children. It focuses on core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals should do to keep children safe and how it is managed practically at Lowton West Primary School.

Key Principles

Everyone who works with children - including teachers, teaching assistants, midday assistants, office staff, pastoral staff, premises staff and all other roles at Lowton West Primary including volunteers and governors- have a responsibility in keeping children safe. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding children is a shared responsibility, and it is acknowledged that no single professional or agency can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. It is recognised that school staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide early help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating.

Academies, Schools and Colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)*. Schools should work with Social Care, the Police, Health Services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

At Lowton West Primary School, safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development in school. School is committed to working together with all relevant agencies to ensure that children and families are able to receive the right help at the right time and that appropriate action is taken swiftly to protect children from harm.

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by

- The Children Act 1989 (as amended).
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

In addition to the revised documents;
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026(KCSiE 2026)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2026 (DFE statutory guidance)

Other key documents are noted, which have prompted changes to safeguarding requirements over time. This policy references these throughout where relevant:

- GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners 2024.
- Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.
- Childcare Act 2006 (as amended in 2018).
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 effective from January 2026)

This policy should also be read in conjunction with Wigan's Threshold of Need Document and Procedure and Wigan's Resolution Policy

Safeguarding is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances and outcomes
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development and
- protecting children from maltreatment.

The term 'safeguarding children' covers a range of measures including child protection procedures. It encompasses a preventative approach to keeping children safe that incorporates pupil health and safety; school behaviour and preventing bullying; supporting pupils with medical conditions; personal, health, social economic education; providing first aid and site security. Consequently, this policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the governors and should be read alongside the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of our pupils:

Relationship and Behaviour Policy	Health and Safety Policy	Anti-Bullying Policy
Equality Statement and Policy	Whistleblowing Policy	SEND Policy
Relationships and Sex education	Staff Handbook and safer working practice	Safer Recruitment Policy
Intimate Care Policy	Online Safety and Social Media Policy	Mental Health and Well Being Policy
GDPR Data Protection Policy	Use of Images Policy	Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers
Use of Mobile Phone and Camera Policy	Safer Eating and Safe Sleep Policy	Policy for CLA and PLAC pupils

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- All of our pupil's / students are safe and protected from harm
- Safeguarding procedures are in place to help pupils and students to feel safe and learn to stay safe
- Adults in the education setting community are aware of the expected behaviours and the legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- All agencies are providing appropriate support to children and young people through adoption of the early help framework

This will be achieved by:

- Supporting the child's / young person's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- Providing a high quality, safe and stimulating environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, feel confident, and are able to enjoy, learn and grow in confidence. Have positive relationships with the adults caring for them and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- Raising the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and young people, of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse (See Appendix 1 and 2) and preventing and intervening earlier to address support and social needs of young people through the early help framework
- Providing a systematic means of monitoring children / young people known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, Lowton West Primary School, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those pupils/students.
- Emphasising the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- Developing a structured procedure within the education setting which will be followed by all members of the education setting community in cases of suspected abuse.
- Also, that staff have had access to specific training and awareness raising concerning:
 - Staff Code of Conduct (for safer working practice)
 - D/DSL training
 - KCSiE (2026) Part 1
 - Looked After Children (CLA)
 - Online safety training for staff (including the filtering and monitoring system)
 - Preventing Radicalisation
 - Staff training
 - Whistleblowing

All Staff need to be aware that children with additional needs i.e. SENDs (Special educational needs & disabilities), CLA (Children looked after) or EAL (English as an additional language) may face additional challenges and vulnerabilities e.g. communication barriers and difficulty overcoming them may lead to abuse and bullying.

In September 2024, the role of Virtual School Heads was further extended to include a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care. Non-statutory guidance on Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of Virtual School Heads.

Wigan Council is committed to ensuring that the appropriate support is in place for CLA and has an appointed designated teacher who will liaise with the Social Worker and Virtual School Head to jointly address the needs of these children.

- Developing and promoting effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police, Health and Social Care.
- Ensuring that all staff working within our education setting who have substantial access to children and young people have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check and a central record is kept for audit. The Guidance regarding DBS checks was updated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and further information can be found regarding what level of check is required for individuals which has been produced by the UK government.
- Curriculum – teaching about safeguarding: Our pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life. We provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes, and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. The PSHE and citizenship curriculum specifically includes the following objectives:
 - Developing pupil self-esteem and communication skills
 - Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety
 - Developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships and consent)

Children's mental health and physical well-being is always of the highest of priority at Lowton West Primary School and is embedded in our ethos and culture.

- Staff have completed 'Attachment Awareness Training', 'Safeguarding Training' and 'Trauma Informed Training' which has enabled staff to have a good level of knowledge around children's potential long lasting effects of trauma from a range of different adverse experiences such as abuse or neglect.
- Staff at Lowton West Primary School are aware that mental health problems can in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect.
- The DSL, Pastoral/Safeguarding manager and SENCO have a clear understanding of the processes involved in ensuring the children who are suffering with mental health issues are referred to the appropriate outside agencies such as CAMHS or our school counsellor.
- However, all staff 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.

Scope

As outlined above, the term 'safeguarding children' covers a range of measures including child protection procedures. It encompasses a preventative approach through the early help framework to keeping children safe that incorporates pupil health and safety; school behaviour and preventing bullying; supporting pupils with medical conditions; personal, health, social economic education; providing first aid and site security.

All staff are aware of the categories of abuse, which are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

The definitions of which can be found in the glossary, and signs and symptoms of the four categories of abuse can be found in *Appendix one and two*.

This policy assumes that any of the categories of abuse could be disclosed within the Borough of Wigan, and gives further information relating to individual types of abuse within this document in line with advice and guidance within Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026

Expectations of staff

All staff are:

- Familiar with this safeguarding policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- Alert to signs and indicators of possible abuse.
- Able to record and report concerns as set out in this policy.
- Able to deal with a disclosure of abuse from a pupil.
- Involved in the implementation of individual education programmes, integrated support plans, child in need plans and interagency child protection plans as required.

In addition, all staff have read and understood Part 1 of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2026).

We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff¹, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils / students from harm, and that the child's / young person's welfare is our paramount concern.

All staff believe that our education setting should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child or young person.

We recognise that a child / young person who is neglected, abused, or witnessed violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of worth. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

We recognise that the education setting may provide the only stability in the lives of children and young people who have been abused or are at risk of harm. Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child. If staff have a concern, they should follow this child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes, including considering where doing so does not place the child at additional risk, whether the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should inform parents or carers to further support the child's wellbeing,
- undertaking a family help assessment, or
- making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child could be in need, is in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

We recognise that the early help framework provides opportunities to intervene early and prevent safeguarding issues developing, as well providing a framework for appropriate support to be wrapped around the child / young person and their family.

Safe Setting, Safe Staff

Our 'Health, Safety and Welfare' policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children and young people both physically within the education setting environment and, for example, in relation to internet use, and when away from the education setting, undertaking off site trips and visits.

School security guidance has been compiled to support the senior management of educational settings in the discharge of their responsibilities by ensuring the development and implementation of suitable procedures. You can request a copy of the 'School Security Guidance' which has been produced by Wigan Council by emailing wscbtraining@wigan.gov.uk

Lowton West Primary School will ensure that:

1. The Governing body / trustees takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering / at risk of suffering abuse, neglect and exploitation. As key strategic decision makers and vision setters for the school, the governors will make sure that our policies and procedures are in line with national and local safeguarding requirements. Governors will work with the senior leaders to make sure the key actions set out in Safe Setting, Safe Staff are in place.

We will ensure that:

All members of the governing body understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- There is a 'Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help' policy together with a staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy. Our Staff Code of Conduct is contained within the Staff handbook (which is reviewed annually and circulated to all staff).
- The education setting operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel that has completed Safer Recruitment training.²
- The education setting has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and to make a referral 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.
- Disqualification by Association is no longer allowed within school settings, although Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, still applies to staff themselves.³
- a senior leader has Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) responsibility and a Deputy with the same level of training and knowledge (may be more than one)
- On appointment, the DSL undertakes interagency training and also undertakes DSL "new to role" training and an "update" course every 2 years
- the Senior lead DSL will have lead responsibility for matters relating to safeguarding and child protection, this will be supported by and not delegated to the deputies. This person or deputy must be available during term time to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- all other staff have Safeguarding training updated as appropriate

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 Safer recruitment training can be accessed through Wigan Safeguarding Children's Board

³ Disqualification by Association now only applies in domestic settings, not schools. Disqualification under the Child Care Act still applies to staff themselves who work in a child care capacity, whether paid, volunteer or are on work placements. Relevant staff are those working in child care, or in a management role because they are: working with reception age children at any time; or working with children older than reception until age eight, outside school hours. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026) paragraph 340 also refers to disqualification: "For staff who work in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision, the school needs to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009".

- any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately
 - a member of the Governing Body, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the LA on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher
 - information is shared appropriately and in a timely way to prevent delay in support and identification of risk
 - Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help policies and procedures are reviewed annually and that the 'Safeguarding, Child Protection and Early Help' policy is available on the school website or by other means.
 - the Governing Body considers how children may be taught about safeguarding. This may be part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal social health and economic education (PSHE) and/or for maintained schools through Relationship and Sex education (RSE).
 - Other specific topics will include online safety.
 - That enhanced DBS checks are in place for Chair of Governors.
 - Governing bodies will put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing in education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
 - The nominated governor for safeguarding liaises with the head teacher and the D/DSL to complete an annual Section 175 safeguarding audit to return to the local authority.
2. KCSiE (2026) is statutory guidance that education settings in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children applying to.
- Governing bodies of maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools) and colleges.
 - Proprietors of independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) and non-maintained special schools. In the case of academies, free schools and alternative provision academies, the proprietor will be the academy trust; and Management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs)
3. The lead DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership team who has; along with the deputy designated safeguarding lead(s), undertaken the relevant training, and, upon appointment will undertake DSL new to role training followed by biannual updates.
- The DSL's who are involved in recruitment and at least one member of the governing body / trustees will also complete safer recruitment training to be renewed every 3 years (if it is felt that a refresher is required.)
 - The name of the designated members of staff for child protection (DSL's and DDSL's) will be clearly visible in the school, with a statement explaining the education settings role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
4. All staff are to have the appropriate level of training relevant to their role:
- All members of staff are trained in, and receive, regular updates in e-safety and reporting concerns
 - All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding statement and safeguarding, child protection and early help (thresholds of need) policy, with the DSL's names clearly displayed, as part of their induction.
 - All other staff, volunteers, and governors / trustees, have child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
 - All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In

most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

- All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse - including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking), criminal exploitation (including financial exploitation), serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.
 - All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the nonconsensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.
 - In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.
5. Child protection and safeguarding concerns or allegations against adults working in the school are referred to the LADO for advice and that any member of staff found not suitable to work with children or young people will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring, following resignation, dismissal, or when we cease to use their service as a result of a substantiated allegation, in the case of a volunteer.
 6. All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to safeguarding and child protection procedures through publication of the education settings Safeguarding, Child protection and Early Help policy, and reference to it in other relevant policies.
 7. The Policy is available publicly either on the education settings website or by other means. Parents / Carer's are made aware of this policy and their entitlement to have a copy of it via the website / newsletter.
 8. All visitors complete a sign in / out form, wear a school ID badge and are provided with safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel.
 9. Visitors of a professional role are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at the education setting. Supporting letter in relation to DBS checks of visitors holding professional ID badges can be found in the guidance provided by Wigan Council and Bridgewater Community Health Care.
[Bridgewater DBS Letter .pdf](#)
[Wigan Council HR letter regarding DBS Checks .pdf](#)
 10. Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's child protection guidelines and procedures.
 11. Our lettings policy, for community use of the premises, will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time. If school receive an allegation relating to an incident during the letting period, school will follow the safeguarding policies and procedures as standard, including informing the LADO.
- Our procedures will be annually (as a minimum) reviewed and updated.

The role of Safeguarding Governor

The Nominated Governor for Safeguarding at Lowton West Community Primary is Dr Gena Merrett. The Nominated Governor is responsible for liaising with the Headteacher (DSL) over all matters related to safeguarding issues. The role is strategic rather than operational – they will not be involved in concerns about individual children. It is not the role of the link governor to supervise the DSL; the link governor should offer support and appropriate challenge. However, the nominated governor for safeguarding will want to be reassured that systems for safeguarding children are in place and embedded into practice. This will be achieved by holding a termly meeting between the DSL and the nominated governor.

Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and undertaking appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and completing checks in relation to Prohibition Orders. Evidence of such robust checks can be found in the schools Single Central Record (SCR). The SCR is checked regularly by the Headteacher (in most cases this person is also the DSL) and the safeguarding governor. Lowton West Primary School ensure that there is at least one person on the interview panel who has completed the 'Safer Recruitment' training.

N.B. DBS checks are free for volunteers.

Recruitment checks are an essential part of safeguarding and school must adhere to the information included in the KCSiE 2026 Part Three: Safer Recruitment and the Education and Training (Welfare of Child) Act 2024.

The school's commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of children is promoted throughout the recruitment process, including the advertisement of the role, the job description and person specification. The school adopts robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in schools and colleges and make it clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken. The school will only accept a CV alongside a full application form, as we are aware that a CV on its own will not provide adequate information.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process school will consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. See Part two - Legislation and the Law for information on data protection and UK GDPR.

References will also be used to support appointment decisions, to verify a candidate's suitability for a role within school and school will adhere the guidance in the KCSiE 2025 to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions.

Agency and third-party staff (supply staff)-

School will obtain written notification from any agency, or third party organisation, that they have carried out the same checks as the school would otherwise perform on any individual who will be working at the school (or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery). In respect of the enhanced DBS check, schools and colleges must ensure that written notification confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business.

Induction

The welfare of all our pupils is of paramount importance. All staff including volunteers are informed of our safeguarding procedures including online safety, at induction. All members of staff and volunteers are provided with child protection awareness information so that they know who to discuss a concern with. As part of the staff induction process, staff will receive a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Positive Behaviour Policy; Anti-bullying Policy; Mobile Phone Policy; Missing Child Policy.

Our induction also includes:

- Plan of support for individuals appropriate to the role for which they have been hired
- Confirmation of the conduct expected of staff within the school – our Staff Code of Conduct which is detailed in the Staff Handbook and LA Policy. All members of staff and volunteers have read, signed and understood the school's Staff Handbook.
- Opportunities for a new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities
 - Confirmation of the line management / mentor process whereby any general concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability will be addressed.

Safeguarding training

This training is for all staff and is updated every 3 years as a minimum to ensure staff understand their role in safeguarding. Any member of staff does not attend the whole school session will be expected to complete this statutory training requirement on their return to school. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as necessary and at least annually. All staff also receive training in respect of online safety, and this is updated, as necessary. Online safety training is an important part of safeguarding and is integrated within the whole school approach to safeguarding training. All Staff will read and sign to confirm they have understood Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

The D/DSL has additional training which is updated every two years as a minimum. The D/DSL also attends multi-agency courses relevant to school needs. Their knowledge and skills are refreshed at least annually e.g. via e-bulletins or safeguarding networking events with other D/DSLs.

Preventing Radicalisation

All staff will undertake Prevent training.

Staff support

Due to the demanding, often distressing nature of child protection work, we support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through the challenges of this aspect of their role with a senior leader and to seek further support as appropriate.

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 DSL and to seek further support as appropriate. DSLs should make use of support available by the Local Authority and the partnerships Safeguarding Team. DSLs will have oversight of Early Help and Child Protection plans with appropriate structure in place to monitor progress and outcomes in partnership with Children's Social Care and other stakeholders (check levels)

School have external services, to support the emotional wellbeing of all staff, including support from the Employee Assistance Programme (details available on the noticeboard and from the Headteacher), School CAMHS link worker, Wigan Family Welfare and School Educational Psychologist.

Governors

Governors undertake the school's Induction programme. 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 school is effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

Safeguarding at Lowton West

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs N. Gould (Acting Headteacher), is a senior member of staff, who undertakes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the school. The Deputy Designated safeguarding leads are, Mrs Higgins (Pastoral/Safeguarding manager), Mrs V Redfern (Assistant Head) and Mrs L McIntyre (Assistant Head).

. These Officers have undertaken the relevant training, and, upon appointment will undertake 'DSL new to role' training followed by biannual updates.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate **lead responsibility** for safeguarding child protection remains with the DSL.

The broad areas of responsibility for the DSL are:

- **Liase** with the local authority and other agencies;
- **Managing referrals** to other agencies including: the local authority children's social care in cases of suspected abuse; Police South West Counter Terrorism Unit where there is a radicalisation concern; the Disclosure and Barring Service in cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and the Police in cases where a crime may have been committed in relation to safeguarding. The DSL will also support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies;
- **Work with others** to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people subject to a child protection plan by attending child protection conferences and implementing the multiagency child protection plan; and liaise with the Local Area Designated Officer, (LADO) as required. DSLs should act a single point of contact for all matters of safeguarding and advice for staff, volunteers, and governors.
- **Undertake Training** to ensure the DSL (and any deputies) has the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role (updated every 2 years). Further knowledge and skills should be updated at regular intervals and shared with relevant parties as appropriate;

- **Raise Awareness** to ensure Lowton West safeguarding and child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately. The DSL will also provide an annual report to the governing body on safeguarding and child protection activity within the school;
- **Manage safeguarding information** through the collection, monitoring, reviewing, safe storage and transfer of safeguarding and child protection files (The [NSPCC](#) provides guidance on this). Keeping records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.

Ensuring that all records are kept and maintained in line with the 'Record Retention' policy. Children Looked After records must be retained for 99 years, and a record is kept and witnessed of disposal of individual's records.

Making sure when a pupil / student leaves, any information regarding safeguarding (current or historic) as well as the child protection file, where applicable, is transferred to the new education setting as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.

- **Availability** of the DSL (or any deputies) during term time and school hours needs to be ensured for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the event of local or national lockdown, the DSL or deputy should at minimum be available on the telephone.

The role of the DSL is explained in more detail in KCSiE 2026

Supporting Children and Young People

We recognise that a child who is abused or has witnessed violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Staff at Lowton West will support all children and young people by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum, as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Teaching children about healthy relationships
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child or young person, about whom there have been concerns, who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the pupils new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

We recognise that the early help framework provides opportunities to intervene early and prevent safeguarding issues developing, as well providing a framework for appropriate support to be wrapped around the child / young person and their family.

Lowton West Primary will consider the need for an Early Help assessment when it is identified that there are low level concerns or emerging needs. Detailed information on Early Help can be found in [Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

It is the responsibility of the education setting to initiate Early Help to identify what the family's

strengths and needs are. This will inform whether the setting can support the family or whether a referral to another agency is needed, such as Family Help. This process provides a way of recording support and interventions that have been provided by the school to the child / young person and also supports a referral for additional support that may be needed from more targeted services where a single agency has been unable to meet that need. A team around the child meeting (TAC) can be arranged to ensure that a multi-agency action plan can be developed. It is important that the child and parents' voice is captured as part of this assessment and that they take ownership of the plan. This plan should be regularly reviewed up to 4 to 6 weeks until outcomes are achieved.

If at any point during the Early Help process, the risk increases and the education setting becomes concerned that the child or young person is, or is likely to suffer significant harm, then a referral will be made to children's social care.

In all cases the educational setting will consider the statutory guidance for schools.

If at any point the education setting becomes concerned that a child or young person is at serious risk of harm they should respond appropriately. If the school is concerned that a child is at **immediate** or **imminent** risk, then they should contact Greater Manchester Police on either 111 or 999. If, however the school is concerned that a child is, or is likely to suffer serious harm but it is not imminent they should call Wigan Children's Social Care Duty Team on 01942 828300.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities

Staff at Lowton West will use the same considerations for children and young people with SEND, as detailed above. However, the setting must also take into consideration that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children and young people. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's SEN or disability without further exploration (the setting must consider the child first and foremost, rather than the child's SEND).
- A higher risk of vulnerability due to factors such as a learning disability, lack of awareness, social isolation, which may contribute to risks such as online vulnerability.
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children; and the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse,
- the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others,
- that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- Children and young people with SEN and disabilities can face a number of challenges to disclosure, which must be recognised and taken into account, including prejudice, negative responses, and low expectations.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) Nina Gould.

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

Children who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. School will consider how to address vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying and take steps to prevent it, including putting appropriate sanctions in place.

Children who are questioning their gender

In recent years, we have seen a significant increase in the number of children who are questioning the way they feel about being a boy or a girl, including the physical attributes of their sex and the related ways in which they fit into society.

It is not for schools to initiate any action in this area; this guidance is focused on circumstances where a child or their parent has raised a request relating to social transition to which a school is responding.

Schools will keep in mind that it is common for children to engage in activities that are less typically associated with their sex. For example, at primary school age, girls may play with trucks, or boys may dress in clothes that are perceived as feminine. Sometimes young children also go through a period of questioning their gender but for the majority this will not continue into adulthood, while a small proportion may continue to question their gender and this feeling may intensify into puberty.

Schools will take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and will be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences. Schools will remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying. Schools will consider policies across school that maintain flexibility and avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes.

School will be a respectful place where bullying is never tolerated:

We know that bullying has a detrimental impact on young people's mental health and their ability to thrive at school. Bullying can affect a child's attainment and wellbeing. We are clear that all forms of bullying, for whatever reason, are unacceptable. School will take a strong, proactive stand against all forms of bullying, and school will tackle bullying at the earliest opportunity to prevent it from escalating.

Considering requests for support with social transition:

School will not initiate any action regarding social transition; this guidance applies where a child or their parent has requested that the school make changes or put support in place in order to facilitate the child presenting as the opposite biological sex ("social transition"). Members of staff should not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the school and a child's parents or carers have been involved as set out in this guidance.

School if required, will consider whether pupils would be best supported by a policy on social transition which explains the steps that we will go through if a child requests support. When considering any request for support with social transition, schools should ensure that their decision-making process is documented and records are kept, ensuring the welfare and best interests of the child and other children.

In making decisions about supporting social transition, schools must comply with their distinct but interacting obligations under safeguarding legislation and equality and human rights law,

Schools have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. They should consider how best to fulfil that duty towards a child who is questioning their gender, as well as their peers, ensuring that any agreed course of action takes account of the impact on all of those

affected.

This means that the first step when considering a child's request for support with social transition will be to consider what is in the best interests of the child and other children, and a decision relating to social transition may not be the same as a child's wishes.

In the vast majority of cases, it would be expected that school will work with parents or carers to determine what is in the best interests of the child as well as considering any clinical evidence or advice and seeking any additional non-clinical professional advice where relevant (for example from the SENCO), including involving the designated safeguarding lead. School should consider everything that could be affecting a child, including whether they have any wider health issues or neurodiversity. In considering the best interests of children, schools should also take a careful approach.

Schools should be particularly conscious of safeguarding concerns relating to primary aged children. Schools should also keep in mind that some children who socially transition before puberty will be "living in stealth" meaning other pupils and/or staff may be unaware of their biological sex, and schools should be aware of related safeguarding concerns.

Parents and carers should be actively involved and their views treated with importance.

Parents and carers have the leading role in the lives of their children, and this area should be no exception. Therefore, where a child who is questioning their gender asks for support from a school, schools should engage parents/carers as a matter of priority. It is important that the views of the child's parents or carers should carry great weight and be properly considered. However, in the rare circumstances where involving parents or carers would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them, the school should involve their designated safeguarding lead to determine what action is needed to safeguard the child, before the parents or carers are contacted or any decisions are taken. The Cass Review is clear that outcomes for children and adolescents are best if they have a supportive relationship with their families and, in the vast majority of cases, we would expect schools and parents/carers to work together to establish what is best for the child. Involving a child's parents/carers in this way will enable schools to promote a child's wellbeing and protect them from harm.

Schools should explore how best to support these conversations, including offering a staff member to be present or to speak to parents or carers on the child's behalf.

The advice above applies in cases where a child has requested support with social transition. In cases where a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not ask the school or college to make changes to how they are treated, there is no reason to break any confidence unless there is a related safeguarding risk. Schools and colleges should follow their usual procedures where a conversation with a child raises concerns about the child's wellbeing or safety, including involving parents or carers where appropriate.

Primary schools should exercise particular caution and would expect support for full social transition to be agreed very rarely.

Schools should comply with obligations under the Equality Act and Human Rights Act when considering requests for support with social transition, as well as complying with their safeguarding obligations as above.

In line with the responsibilities of schools to adhere to the highest standards of safeguarding for the children and young people in their care, alongside obligations under the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, schools must not allow pupils into toilets, changing rooms, or residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex, with no exceptions. Similarly, where schools have implemented single-sex sports as being necessary for safety reasons, there should be no exceptions and pupils must not be allowed to participate in sports designated for the opposite sex.

In relation to other policies, the school or college will need to consider whether the policy will place a child who is questioning their gender (and other gender-questioning children) at a disadvantage relative to other children.

The school or college should also make sure that children and their families are aware that while the school or college will appropriately sanction any cases of bullying or harassment, and take a strong stand against bullying, the school or college must also be conscious of the rights of pupils and staff in relation to their religion or belief. However, schools and colleges supporting social transition might consider discussing options with pupils and staff such as using names instead of pronouns.

The circumstances of a case and/or the needs of a child may change over time. For example, it may become known that there are safeguarding issues that were not previously apparent (including where a young child is 'living in stealth' or that a decision has placed an unsustainable pressure on a school resources. In such cases, the school may need to review their original decision, including involving the child's parents or carers. In deciding whether to review a decision, the school should involve their designated safeguarding lead immediately.

Having the correct information about a child is important in the context of school fulfilling their safeguarding duties, and they should make sure all relevant staff are aware of a child's biological sex in all cases. Schools are legally required to record a child's biological sex accurately wherever it is recorded.

Schools should be particularly conscious of the vulnerabilities of children who have fully socially transitioned from an early age and may be living in stealth (that is, school friends/staff may be unaware of their biological sex). The Cass Review emphasised that these children are likely to approach puberty in a fearful and anxious state. Schools should involve the designated safeguarding lead in these cases.

More information and guidance can be found in KCSiE 2026 and Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding children with medical conditions

The fact that there has been an incident relating to the management of a child or young person's medical condition (including allergies) would not in and of itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the child or young person might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to a school or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk. Further information is provided in the statutory guidance and Lowton West on supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Allergy safety in schools.

Responding to concerns and disclosures

Reporting Concerns

All staff will be aware of their responsibility to report any safeguarding concern (no matter how small) ASAP to the DSL or DDSL using the schools prescribed practice. Incident or concern will be recorded using our school concern slip (blank copies of which can be found on the Safeguarding Board).

Responding to a disclosure

Do:

- **Create a safe environment by offering** the child a private and safe place if possible.
- **Stay calm** and reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame.
- **Tell** the child that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you.
- **Listen carefully** and **tell** the child what you are going to do next.
- Use the **'tell me', 'explain', 'describe'** and/or mirroring strategy.

- **Tell only the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.**
- **Record** in detail using the Welfare Concern Record without delay, using the child's own words where possible.

Do NOT:

- Take photographs of any injuries or copy any images from a child's phone onto to your own device which could be classed as illegal content or a nude/semi-nude image of a child.
- Postpone or delay the opportunity for the pupil to talk.
- Take notes while the pupil is speaking or ask the pupil to write an account.
- Try to investigate the allegation yourself.
- Promise confidentiality, e.g. Say you will keep 'the secret'.
- Approach or inform the alleged abuser.

It is the responsibility of each adult in school to ensure that the D/DSL receives the record of concern without delay. In the absence of the D/DSL, staff will seek advice direct from Children's Social Care.

All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

Wigan Safeguarding Partnership have produced further information on Dealing with Disclosures from a Child or young Person.

School will provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process to help social care assessments consider contexts outside the home and enable a contextual approach to harm. Additional information is available following in KCSiE 2026 on Contextual Safeguarding.

Staff should recognise that children might not find it easy to talk about their abuse verbally. Staff might also overhear conversations that suggest a child has been harmed or might receive a report from a friend or child.

During term time, the DSL and /or a DDSL are always available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

In some circumstances, the D/DSL or member of staff may seek advice by ringing Children's Social Care.

The voice of the child is central to our safeguarding practice and pupils are encouraged to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

We are committed to work in partnership with parents and carers. In most situations, we will discuss initial concerns with them. However, the D/DSL will not share information where there are concerns that if so doing would:

- Place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- Place an adult at increased risk of serious harm
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

When responding to allegations which are found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child or person who has made the allegation is in need of support or may have been abused by someone else.

Involving Parents and Carers

In general, the DSL will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before approaching other agencies and will seek their consent before making a referral to another agency. However, there may be occasions when the school will contact another agency before informing parents/carers because it considers that contacting them may increase the risk of significant harm to the child.

Record keeping

Child protection records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern – recorded on the school's Safeguarding Concern sheet by the staff member reporting the concern to the DSL
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved recorded by the DSL
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached, the rationale for those decisions and the outcome recorded by the DSL

Information Sharing

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential and information is handled in line with the school policies and procedures. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. School has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for school's governing body and staff to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place and understood that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the school and with local authority children's social care, the safeguarding partners and other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

It is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. See ICO guidance 'For Organisations' which includes information about obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.

In addition, see the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which will help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

The Government has issued Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners Guidance that included 7 'Golden Rules' of Information Sharing in safeguarding:

The Government guidance (described by the NSPCC, 2018) is:

1. **Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and human rights law are not barriers** to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom, for what purpose and the rationale behind the decision.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information to safeguard children and cannot assume that someone else will pass on the information. Sharing of information will be necessary for the purpose for which it's being shared, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

Professional judgement should be used to ensure that the information shared is focused and proportionate. This may include summarising or omitting information which is not necessary for safeguarding purposes. But care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk. This is further supported by the new information sharing duty, which is intended to give staff greater confidence to share information appropriately and in a timely way to safeguard children.

Further guidance regarding information sharing is available for staff in KCSiE 2026 p.38 and specific statutory guidance on Information Sharing is expected in due course.

The update to Working Together (2026) states that data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information, to keep a child safe. Consent is not required when sharing information for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of a child. Working Together (2026) recommends using the GDPR lawful bases for sharing.

Key organisations who have a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are:

- The local authority.
- NHS England.
- Clinical commissioning groups.
- NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts.
- The local policing body.
- British Transport Police Authority.
- Prisons.
- National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies, Youth offending teams.
- Bodies within the education and /or voluntary sectors, and any individual to the extent that they are providing services in pursuance of section 74 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Disagreements, Escalation and Resolution

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between colleagues and between agencies.

Staff must be confident and able to professionally disagree and challenge decision-making as an entirely legitimate activity. A part of our professional responsibility to promote the best safeguarding practice. Staff are encouraged to press for re-consideration if they believe a decision to act / not act in response to a concern raised about a child is wrong. In such cases the Wigan Safeguarding Partnership Case Resolution Protocol (formerly escalation policy) can be used if necessary. If we, ourselves are challenged professionally, then we see this as an opportunity to reflect on our decision making.

Prevention

We recognise that our school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children and young people by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults.

Schools play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict. The school will have a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Such a programme should be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities). This program will tackle, at an age- appropriate stage, issues such as:

- healthy and respectful relationships
- boundaries and consent
- stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- the concepts of, and laws relating to - sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called 'honour'-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support, and
- what constitutes harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

If early help is appropriate, the DSL/ DDSL or member of the Pastoral Team will contact the early help hub to ensure there is no current intervention and will generally lead on liaising with other agencies, setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and if the situation is not improving then consideration should be given to making a referral to children's social care, for assessment for statutory services.

The education settings community will;

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children and young people e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children and young people to report whether they have had happy / sad lunchtimes / playtimes / breaks
- Ensure that all pupils and students know there is a trusted adult in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know whom they should turn to for help. This will include anti-bullying work, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian, and cycle training. Also focused work in year 6 to prepare for transition to secondary school and more personal safety / independent travel. KCSiE 2026 (p.32) provides additional resources and links to help teachers teach children about safeguarding, including online safety.
- Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks. It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the School's Staff Handbook, which states that mobile phones and other personal electronic devices must not be used within the classroom environment or when working with learners within formal school time. Mobile phones must be securely held away from the classroom setting.

Allegations against staff, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors

All Education setting and Early Years staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child.

All staff should be expected to have awareness and knowledge of Guidance on Behaviour Issues, along with the school's own Positive Behaviour Policy and this should be part of induction for all new staff or volunteers.

Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers, will be given at induction, (see school's Staff Handbook, the LA Staff Code of Conduct and Use of Mobile Phone and Camera policy January 2021) alongside information based on the Guidance for Safer Working Practices (2020).

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors may have:

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

This applies to any child the member of staff including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in our school

If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the headteacher. Where the concerns or allegations are about the headteacher, these should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

The headteacher/Chair of Governors should report the concern to the **Designated Officer for Allegations Heather Martin- 01942 486034** lado@wigan.gov.uk

All allegations must be managed in line with the statutory guidance in Part 4 of KCSiE 2026; the first section which covers allegations or concerns that meet the threshold or harm and a new second section which covers allegations or concerns that don't meet the threshold and also the school's whistleblowing procedure.

If such an allegation is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children / young people, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher.

The Head teacher, on all such occasions, will discuss the content of the allegation with the Designated Officer (LADO).⁵

In some circumstances school will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them; for example, supply teachers, trainee teachers or contracted staff provided by an employment agency or business. Where this applies, schools share safeguarding responsibilities with the employment agency or business. Schools remain responsible for gathering the facts and managing the safeguarding process, while working closely with the employment agency or business, which will usually lead on any disciplinary action.

Whilst schools are not the employer of supply teachers, they are still responsible for ensuring that allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should a school decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the supply agency or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools or colleges, whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school or college, whilst they carry out their investigation.

Where concerns or allegations relate to a trainee teacher placed within a school, the expectations of schools and set out above also apply. In addition, teacher training providers are expected to follow the same procedures as set out for supply agencies.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher / Head of School, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors / Trustees who will consult LADO, without notifying the Headteacher first. 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 Human Resources / Legal in order to make that decision and informing the LADO at the earliest opportunity.

The school will follow Wigan's procedures for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child / young person home pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally, as a result of a consultation with the DO.

In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors / Trustees with advice as outlined above.

We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user / volunteer in the event of an allegation arising in that context. Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Where the allegation concluded to be either, unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated the case manager (and if they have been involved the LADO) should consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if improvements can be made.

⁵ LADO process can be found on the WSCB website <http://www.wiganlscb.com/Professionals/LADO.aspx>

Whistleblowing

All staff can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the education settings safeguarding regime. Our whistleblowing procedures, which are reflected in staff training and our Code of Conduct, are in place for such concerns to be raised with the Headteacher.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Headteacher or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline - Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 from 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday, or email help@nspcc.org.uk
- A member of the governing body: Dr G. Merrett (Chair of Governors)

We recognise that children and young people 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 attitudes or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the Area Education Officer or the Designated Officer (for allegations) following the whistleblowing policy.

Whistleblowing regarding the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body (or trustees) whose contact details are readily available to staff (as pertained to setting). It's acknowledged that Whistle-blowers have the right to remain anonymous, however identifying yourself may assist with any further investigations.

Physical Intervention and the use of reasonable force

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child or young person is endangering him / herself or others.

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children / young people. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means using no more force than necessary and staff should refer to the section on 'use of reasonable force' within the behaviour policy and the Positive Handling Policy. Such events should be recorded by completing a serious incident log and signed by a witness.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention or reasonable force will be appropriately trained in an accredited positive handling technique. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child or young person may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that appropriate touch is acceptable in the context of working with children and young people, and all staff are aware of The Guidance for Safer Working Practices (2020) to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

Departmental advice for schools is documented in the Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools guidance 2026. The department believes that the adoption of a 'no contact' policy at a school or can leave staff unable to fully support and protect their pupils and students. It encourages headteachers, principals, governing bodies and proprietors to adopt sensible policies, which allow and support their staff to make appropriate physical contact. The decision on whether or not to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with

SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, schools and colleges should in considering the risks carefully recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. They should also consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and their Public Sector Equality Duty. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children, and agreeing them with parents and carers, schools and colleges can reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

At Lowton West Primary School, Positive Handling Plans are developed, where needed, for pupils with additional needs to ensure that they are appropriately supported.

For further information refer to Lowton West Primary School's Positive Handling Policy.

Children who abscond or are missing from school site

There should be clear procedures in school around who to notify and what to do should a child be missing from school. This includes completing a full 'sweep' of the area and checking that the child is not hiding from sight. The Headteacher should be notified of any instance of a missing child without delay.

Children who go missing are particularly vulnerable to all sorts of risk. Where a child has gone missing a report should immediately be made to the Police via 999.

There is a national definition of what constitutes a missing person (including a child): "Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another".

It should be stressed that most missing children are found very quickly and safely returned to school or home. However, should you suspect that a child has been taken from school (abducted) you should make this clear in your contact with the Police, including any eye witness information. Communication with the child's parent or guardian is important and should be done as soon as possible by the Safeguarding Team. The Headteacher will also follow the 'LA Critical Incidents' protocol and consider if a referral to OFSTED is appropriate (e.g. following the criteria of a serious incident).

Children Missing from Education (CME)

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that 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 their going missing in future.

The school must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

The Local Authority requires Education Settings to follow the Wigan Council Children Missing from Education Policy and Procedure. Further guidance is detailed in Children Missing Education (2016) and Further guidance on this has been produced by the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures. The school should hold at least 2 current contact numbers per child to ensure reasonable attempts can be made to locate missing children/ families.

Staff report immediately to the D/DSL, if they know of any child who may be:

- Missing (from education, home or care) – whereabouts unknown and unable to make contact (as a result of making reasonable enquiries as outlined in Section 10 of the Children Act 2004)
- Missing education – (compulsory school age (5-16) with no school place and not electively home educated).

The designated teacher for CLA and care leavers is to discuss any unauthorised / unexplained absence of any children who are looked after with the Virtual School Team, when required.

Should a pupil's attendance become a cause for concern, it is advisable to intervene early to prevent entrenched non-school attendance. School should contact the Early Help Hub (EHH) to initiate an Early Help, if appropriate.

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils: Child on Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)

We recognise that children are capable of abusing other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school. **All** staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. Staff will ensure that children feel confident to report this in the knowledge that it will be appropriately investigated and responded to. This abuse is taken as seriously as all other forms of abuse. There is a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse at our school. Victims and perpetrators will be offered appropriate support in all cases.

All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator.

As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that child-on-child abuse is preventable. As well as knowing how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early, staff should know that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

It is essential that all victims of abuse are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

All children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. **All** staff need to be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. Staff have recognition of the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse and that for some but not all, that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys the perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'),
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse),
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence), this may also include misogyny and misandry,
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse,
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to

- strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party,
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes,
- upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between children and young people. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”, as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny an unsafe environment for children and in worse cases a culture that normalises abuse leading children to accept it as normal and not coming forward to report it. Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence:

- Could put pupils in the school at risk.
- Is violent.
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting).

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, school staff will inform the DSL and record the allegation.

The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.

The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the child(ren) who experience the abuse and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed;

The DSL will contact the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), and other agencies if appropriate.

We will minimize and prevent the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour.

Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different vulnerable groups—ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.

Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially by speaking to the staff that work in their class or a member of the Senior Leadership Team to ensure their wishes are understood. Posters are displayed on the Deputy Headteacher's office door and assemblies led throughout the year reinforce this message.

Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming another child could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

All schools are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010. Schools should tackle prejudice and promote understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The definition that has been adopted by the government and should be used when considering prejudice related incidents 'A prejudice related incident is any incident which is perceived to be prejudice by the victim or any other person'

Further information can be found on the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719902/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf

Reporting Harmful Sexual Behaviours. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Including Child on Child Abuse

This is a form of child-on-child abuse, which may include sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or making and sharing nude or semi-nude pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting).

Dealing with such cases are complex and the DSL will take a lead role in managing the situation on a case by case basis. However, all staff should ensure that:

- They never forward or copy an image from a child's phone to their own or any other device, which could be categorised as an illegal image/ unlawful content.
- All who experience abuse are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Those who experience abuse should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment.
- Nor should those who experience abuse ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- In addition, support should be made available for the perpetrator of sexual abuse to understand motivations behind the abuse and challenge attitudes. It is understood that children who abuse other children may well have been abused themselves.
- In addition to existing advice about managing a disclosure contained in this policy, staff will follow Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice 2018.

All staff should act immediately upon any issues relating to sexting and/or child- on-child abuse and immediately investigate and deal with any incidents. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Incidents should be recorded and, ~~where necessary~~, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed. All racial and gender based incidents should be recorded and handed to the DSL or the DDSL. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse. This could, for example, include girls being sexually touched/ assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/ hazing type violence. Victims and perpetrators of child-on-child abuse will be supported as necessary via the school and/or relevant external agencies.

Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. School should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g. about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child's distress is.

Consequently, child- on- child abuse is dealt with as a safeguarding concern, recorded as such and not managed through the systems set out in the school behaviour policy. Victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child –on- child abuse will be supported through the school's pastoral system, and the support will be regularly reviewed.

The DSL liaises with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments and appropriate specialist targeted work for children that are identified as posing a potential risk to other children. Our school policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms, e.g. Cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences / perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse.

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of known bullying incidents and will keep a record of racist incidents.

The DSL will manage any incidents in line with the guidance contained in Part 5 KCSiE 2026. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) Education Group has also published sexting advice for schools and colleges. School recognises that allegations of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made.

Relationships Education and Health Education give schools the opportunity to discuss vital issues such as sexual violence and harassment, consent, bullying and child-on-child abuse and an opportunity for educators to challenge negative gendered attitudes not in line with the school ethos.

Schools have flexibility to decide how they discharge their duties effectively within the first year of compulsory teaching and are encouraged to take a phased approach (if needed) when introducing these subjects. The Statutory guidance: relationships education relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. Colleges may cover relevant issues through tutorials.

Revised guidance on Relationships, Sex, and Health Education was published July 2025, for introduction September 2026.

We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by providing:

- A relevant curriculum, that helps children to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping themselves safe.
- Established / publicised systems for children to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be taken seriously.

School will establish an environment where children feel safe to talk to adults in school about any worries or concerns they may have. This will be reinforced through the school curriculum and PSHE Jigsaw Scheme of Work. Staff will follow the procedures outlined in 'Responding to Concerns or Disclosures' on page 17 as detailed earlier in the policy.

Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis with the DSL taking a leading role, supported by other agencies such as Children's Social Care and the Police as required

School recognises that even if no cases of child-on-child abuse are reported at school, this does not mean it's not happening within the school.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a deputy.

A list of further resources, information and guidance have been added to KCSiE 2026 to help school staff manage and deal with harmful sexual behaviour and support children.

Further information with regards to harmful sexual behaviours can be found in Appendix A of this policy

Online Sexual Abuse

Online sexual abuse involved the use of technology to manipulate, exploit, coerce or intimidate a child to (but not limited to) engage in sexual activity, produce sexual material/content, force a child to look at or watch sexual activities, encourage a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or groom a child in preparation for sexual abuse (either online or offline). It can also involve directing others to, or coordinating, the abuse of children online. As with other forms of sexual abuse, online abuse can be misunderstood by the child and others as being consensual, occurring without the child's immediate recognition or understanding of abusive or exploitative conduct. In addition, fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor. No child under the age of 18 can consent to being abused or exploited. Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse, it can involve serious organised crime and it can be carried out by either adults or peers.

Online Safety

The topic of online safety is considerable and can be linked to issues such as child sexual exploitation, bullying and radicalisation. Issues can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; e.g. Pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; e.g. commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; e.g. making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group

The school will ensure it is proactive in addressing online safety through:

- Education of pupils through the curriculum;
- Keeping parents up to date on how to support keeping their children to keep safe online; the government has released new guidance for parents to support children's online activity [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#)
- Reviewing online safety practices as part of a whole school approach to online safety;
- Filtering and monitoring to protect users but not leading to unreasonable restrictions;
- Staff training which is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach;
- Information sharing to enable the school community to be kept up to date.
- Schools can use the department's 'plan technology for your school service' to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.
- 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.
- Guidance to support schools and colleges to understand safety considerations and legal responsibilities if they choose to use Generative AI (either teacher-facing or pupil-facing) can be found at [Generative artificial intelligence in education](#).
- To complement this, the department, in partnership with the Chiltern Learning Trust and Chartered College of Teaching, have published online resources to help school and college staff to use AI safely and effectively. Module 3 provides

important information on identifying and mitigating key risks associated with safeguarding, ethics, data protection, and intellectual property.

For further information see government guidance [Teaching online safety in school](#)

Staff should also refer to the KCSEI 2026 guidance which has been updated to reflect the latest guidance on sharing nude and semi-nude images and videos published by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS, 2020).

School adopt a whole school approach to online safety, which is reflected in all relevant policies, the curriculum, staff training, the role of the DSL and parental engagement.

Anti-Bullying

Our school policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/ perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse. We keep a record of bullying incidents.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical. Staff should recognise this as a potential child protection issue and follow the schools Anti Bullying Policy.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children's social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Racist Incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately, and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We will keep a record of racist incidents.

Equalities Statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children and families' diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, race, economic condition, disability, and religion. With regards to safeguarding, we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Sports:

With regards to sports in school, Lowton West will adhere to the guidance set out in KCSiE 2026 (in line with the Equality Act 2010) which states:

As children get older, some sports are typically taught and played in single-sex groups. The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception in relation to single-sex sport. It applies to participation in any sport or game, or activity of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). This means that schools can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances without discriminating unlawfully against them on the basis of their sex.

Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety, and where this is the case there must be no exceptions. In other cases, schools may have adopted a policy of single-sex sports for reasons related to fairness.

Where there are no safety concerns and a child makes a request relating to how they participate, schools will need to consider the request in light of the advice on "considering requests for support with social transition". This means that the school would need to take into account all the relevant factors, including whether supporting social transition is overall in the best interests of the child, as well as considering the impact on other children and the aim of creating safe and fair environments for children to participate in PE.

Safeguarding requirements relating to school premises and alternative accommodation:

(Lowton West adheres to the following guidance in KCSiE 2026)

Toilets:

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

Schools must provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over (apart from where individual toilets are in a room that can be locked from the inside, intended for use by one pupil at a time). Where a school provides mixed-sex toilets in addition to single-sex toilets, schools should assess safeguarding risks and plan accordingly, for example, mixed-sex toilets should be in individual, lockable rooms and open directly onto public areas (e.g. a corridor).

Therefore, if a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, schools should consider whether they can provide an alternative toilet facility, for example self-contained individual toilets, without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child, or of any other children.

It is important that schools and colleges keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Changing Rooms

Schools must not allow a child, aged 11 years or older, to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. This means that the changing accommodation must be suitable for the pupils they are provided for, having regard to their ages, numbers, and sex and any special requirements they may have and is informed by the school's safeguarding obligations. When responding to a request to support any degree of social transition, a school must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms designated for their sex, schools should consider whether they can provide an alternative changing facility without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. This could be a fully enclosed room – for use by one child at a time that can be secured from the inside – or by allowing access to facilities at an alternative time. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other children.

It is important that schools and colleges keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Residential accommodation:

To comply with their safeguarding duties, schools must not allow a child to share overnight accommodation with a child of the opposite biological sex. Responding to a request to support any degree of social transition must not include allowing access to residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex. In allocating sleeping arrangements such as dormitories, tents or shared rooms for school trips, schools must have regard to their duties under the Equality Act, their safeguarding obligations, and other relevant regulations and standards, including those relating to residential accommodation.

If, however, a child does not want to share a room with another child of the same biological sex, alternative arrangements should be sought where possible. Alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of any child. They might include, for instance, finding a suitable separate room for the child.

Where a child's concern reflects a request for support with social transition, the school should consider the section on "considering requests for support with social transition" before making any decisions.

Our safeguarding curriculum

At Lowton West Primary School, all stakeholders ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, this includes online safety and mental health and well-being. This is fully embedded across the curriculum.

Our pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. We provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. The PSHE and citizenship curriculum and Jigsaw scheme of work specifically includes the following objectives:

- Health and Well-being
- Developing pupil self-esteem and communication skills
- Developing strategies for self-protection including online safety
- Healthy Relationships - developing a sense of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in adults and within peer relationships (positive relationships and consent)

PSHE Curriculum including Relationships and Health Education

At Lowton West, our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum enables our children to become healthy, safe, independent and responsible members of society, bringing together citizenship with personal and mental well-being, whilst promoting fundamental British values. We wish to offer a cohesive whole-school approach which aims to help them understand how they are developing personally and socially, and tackles many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up.

The Jigsaw PSHE curriculum will support the development of the skills, attitudes, values and behaviour, which enable pupils to:

- Have a sense of purpose
- Value self and others
- Form relationships
- Make and act on informed decisions
- Communicate effectively
- Work with others
- Respond to challenge
- Be an active partner in their own learning
- Be active citizens within the local community
- Explore issues related to living in a democratic society
- Become healthy and fulfilled individuals

The Jigsaw Units of work each term are:

- Being in my World
- Celebrating Differences
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me
- Relationships
- Changing Me

Relevant issues will also be covered through Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (formerly known as Sex and Relationship Education) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. The Government has made regulations which will make the subjects of Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state funded schools) this is now mandatory and compulsory.

Although PSHE is taught through discreet lessons, it also underpins all activities, assemblies, educational visits and extra-curricular clubs. Further enrichment days planned as part of our SMSC Calendar of events also provide further opportunities to support safeguarding in the curriculum, for example: NSPCC assemblies and workshops, Safer Internet Day, Bikeability, Anti-Bullying and World Mental Health Week.

Teaching Online Safety

Digital literacy and online safeguarding is explicitly taught as part of our safeguarding curriculum through our Purple Mash Computing scheme of work from Reception through to Year 6 and more widely across our school community during parent workshops and through regular parent communication. Online safety information is regularly shared with parents through newsletters, emails and the school website.

At Lowton West Primary School we ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to ensure the children are safeguarded whilst online learning. Home learning platforms used to aid home learning are reputable online education websites such as:

- TT Rockstars
- Spelling Shed
- Maths Shed
- Purple Mash

Where children are asked to learn online at home, for example because of the coronavirus pandemic, school will follow the advice from the DfE on safeguarding and remote education (DfE, 2021b).

Health & Safety Policy

Our Health, Safety & Well-Being policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment, and for example in relation to internet use, and when away from the school and when undertaking school trips and visits.

Social Media Policy

The relevant social media policy reflects the consideration given to safe use of social media for staff. The school community will:

Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

Keeping children safe online

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. The schools approach to keeping children safe from abuse and harm online is set out in the Online Safety Policy, which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate.

School staff should consult the non-statutory guidance, 'Teaching online safety in school 'Guidance supporting schools to teach their pupils how to stay safe online within new and existing school subjects' (June 2019). Children also need to be supported with the skills to keep themselves safe online, as they increasingly live their lives in a digital world. Useful information can be found in 'Education for a connected world framework' (2020) and the UKCIS Online Safety Audit for Trainees and NQTs (2020). The guidance offers specific advice about the online knowledge and skills that pupils should have the opportunity to develop at different stages of their lives.

Schools should ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online in line with KCSiE (2026).

For further information, please see the school website and the schools On-line Safety Policy.

Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children to report whether they have had happy/sad lunchtimes/playtimes.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities which 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, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training. Also focused work in Year 6 to prepare for transition to Secondary school and more personal safety/independent travel.
- We will ensure that appropriate ICT filters and monitoring are in place to ensure safety online. The school will ensure that online safety is included in the curriculum.
- Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

If Early Help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will contact the Early Help Hub to ensure there is no current intervention and will generally lead on liaising with other agencies, setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

Schools, as relevant agencies, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided, and designated safeguarding leads (and their deputies) will need to familiarise themselves with this document.

Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

When school feels there is a need to introduce an Early Help Referral they will do so following the guidance set out in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 policy.

Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

The education settings community will;

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children and young people e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, asking children and young people to report whether they have had happy / sad lunchtimes / playtimes / breaks
- Ensure that all pupils and students know there is a trusted adult in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, opportunities to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know whom they should turn to for help. In particular, this will include anti-bullying work, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training. Also focused work in year 6 to prepare for transition to secondary school and more personal safety / independent travel
- Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.

Elective Home Education

Although many children have positive experiences of home education, for some children it means they are less visible to services that are there to keep them safe and supported. If a parent expresses their intention to educate a child at home, professionals should work together to coordinate a meeting with the parent or carer. This is particularly important if a child has special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), is vulnerable or has a social worker.

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, a school must make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admissions register.

Staff should be familiar with guidance for the local authority on elective home education (DfE, 2019).

Private Fostering Arrangements

Where schools and colleges become aware that a pupil (a child under the age of 16 or 18 if disabled) may be in a private fostering arrangement/ is provided with care and accommodation by someone who is not a close relative, for longer than 28 consecutive days in that person's home, they should raise this, in the first instance, with the DSL. The school or college should notify the local authority by contacting Wigan Children's Duty team on **01942 828300** Once notified, the local authority will check that the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child and assess the child's circumstances.

Children staying with host families

Private fostering and educational institutions

Schools and colleges quite often make arrangements for their children to have learning experiences where, for short periods, the children may be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related. This might happen, for example, but not only, as part of a foreign exchange visit or sports tour. Such arrangements could amount to “private fostering” under the Children Act 1989 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, or both. The following paragraphs are not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all the circumstances in which private fostering may arise, but only to those situations which might arise for schools and colleges through the normal course of their activities in promoting learning activities for children.

DBS check request by a regulated activity provider

Where a private fostering arrangement is made by a school or college or a third party (such as a language school) and the school, college or third party has the power to terminate the arrangement, then it could be the regulated activity provider for the purposes of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. A regulated activity provider will be committing an offence if they allow a person to carry out a regulated activity whilst barred and they know or have reason to believe that the person was barred. Where the school or college is the regulated activity provider, it should request a DBS enhanced check (which will include barred list information) to help determine their suitability for the arrangement. However, where the parents make the arrangements themselves, this will be a private matter between the child’s parents and the host parents and in these circumstances the school or college will not be the regulated activity provider.

Young Carers

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol. Our school recognises the impact that being a Young Carer can have on pupil’s attendance, attainment, behaviour and well-being and the importance of identifying those young people so that appropriate support can be provided at the right time by the right services. WSP coordinates our local Young Carers Strategy and Wigan Council have produced some useful information for young carers, families and professionals.

Where a pupil / student at our school is identified as having additional support needs due to being a young carer, or where a multi-agency approach may be required, our school uses the Early Help Framework and routes into the Family Help Service.

Safeguarding Children and Young People Vulnerable to Violent Extremism

Preventing Radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be part of schools’ wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, education settings should be alert to a change in children’s and young person’s behaviour that could indicate that they are in need of protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children and young people who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools’ or colleges’ safeguarding approach. Our school safeguarding policy will therefore be written to comply with the schools duty under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in accordance with the Department of Education advice for schools regarding The Prevent Duty. and aligns with the processes described in the Wigan’s Prevent Policy and Procedure.

Educate Against Hate is a website launched by Her Majesty's Government has been developed to support and equip school and college leaders, teachers, and parents with information, tools and resources (including on the promotion of fundamental British values) to help recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. The platform provides information on and access to training resources for teachers, staff and school and college leaders, some of which are free such as Prevent e-learning, via the Prevent Training catalogue.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel Programme.

Channel Programme

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Prevent referrals are first assessed by police and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. Whilst the referral is being assessed, should any further or new information come to light, this should also be passed to police. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment.

An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages. Guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance, and a Channel awareness e-learning programme is available for staff at: Channel General Awareness.

Extra-familial harm/ Contextual Safeguarding

Staff should be aware of the harms that can happen to children outside of the family and should consider the contexts with which harm takes place. An understanding of a child/young person's life outside of school and the family home is vital to provide a full picture of the child's needs and their exposure to harm.

Children at risk of sexual exploitation (CSE):

Our school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other key staff are trained in spotting the possible signs of child sexual exploitation outlined in Appendix One (this is not an exhaustive or definitive list).

Our school safeguarding policy will align with the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership Guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation

http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_sg_ab_sexual_exploit.html#preventing

The referral pathway for children where concerns regarding Child Sexual Exploitation have been raised is via the Professional Referral Form

Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control

We recognise the significant impact domestic abuse and coercive control can have on children and young people, therefore we operate in partnership with Operation Encompass, a system which facilitates the sharing of information relating to domestic incidents where children live or frequent. Any incidents of domestic abuse reported to the police will be notified to the education setting to effectively support the child(ren) / young person. Staff should be aware of the impact that domestic abuse and coercive control has upon children, both as witnesses and by being forced to collude in this.

If you wish to speak to an educational/child psychologist following an Operation Encompass referral you are now able to contact the Operation Encompass Teachers' National Helpline, 8.00am to 11.00am, Monday to Friday on 0845 646 0890

Staff can also access training on Operation Encompass.

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and 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. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional

This definition includes 'honour' based abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group. The definition does not cover violence by an under 16 years old against another family member.

Where the perpetrator is over 18 and the victim under 18, this is regarded as child abuse. If both perpetrator and victim are under 18 years, consideration of the need for a child protection investigation to be undertaken would still be required, but the national definition allows any abuse between 16 -17-year-olds to be considered as domestic abuse.

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Facts and stats about domestic violence

Official statistics show the amount of domestic abuse recorded by the authorities every year. But the problem is much bigger than shown in official statistics, as many victims and children don't tell anyone about the abuse, and they are not recorded as crimes. Safe Lives (National Charity <http://www.safelives.org.uk>) also uses data from an Insights database – the largest national database of domestic violence cases in the UK, with more than 35,000 records from 2009 to date.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Children affected by domestic abuse

- 140,000 children live in households where there is high-risk domestic abuse.
- 64% of high and medium risk victims have children, on average two each.
- A quarter (25%) of children in high-risk domestic abuse households are under three years old. On average, high-risk abuse has been going on for 2.6 years, meaning these children are living with abuse for most of their life.
- 62% of children living in domestic abuse households are directly harmed by the perpetrator of the abuse, in addition to the harm caused by witnessing the abuse of others.

‘The harm or risk of harm to the child includes any impairment to the child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person’. (Adoption and Children Act 2002).

Domestic abuse is one of the most prevalent forms of abuse, with Women's Aid estimating that 160,000 children are currently living in households where domestic abuse is taking place. This is likely to be an underestimate, however, with much abuse remaining hidden and not coming to the attention of services.

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. Experiencing domestic abuse 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.

- Nearly 2 in 3 children (62%) exposed to domestic violence were also directly harmed.
- Children suffer multiple physical and mental health consequences because of living with domestic violence.
- Only half of the children were previously known to children's social services. But 80% were known to at least one public agency.

If you have concerns of this nature, ensure that you share this with the DSL and complete a record on a Record of Concern Sheet.

Warning Signs of Relationship Abuse might include

- Physical signs of injury / illness
- Truancy, failing grades
- Withdrawal, passivity, being compliant
- Changes in mood and personality
- Isolation from family and friends
- Frequent texts and calls from boyfriend / girlfriend
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour / language / attitudes
- Depression
- Pregnancy
- Use of drugs / alcohol (where there was no prior use)
- Self-harm
- Eating disorders or problems sleeping
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress
- Bullying / being bullied

Signs of Relationship Abuse to look out for

- Being late for school / not attending (especially if abuser attends same school)
- Arriving early / staying late to avoid abuser
- Not focused in lessons as s/he is preoccupied and worried
- Very gendered expectations of career and achievement
- Feeling unsafe as afraid of being traced by abuser via school

- Disturbed sleep affecting concentration
- Appearing isolated and removed
- Worried that everyone at school knows what is happening

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. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Operation Encompass

Wigan Encompass

The purpose of Wigan Encompass is to safeguard and support children and young people who have been involved in or witness to a domestic abuse incident. Domestic abuse impacts on children in a number of ways. Children are at increased risk of physical injury during an incident, either by accident or because they attempt to intervene. Even when not directly injured, children are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.

Encompass has been created to address this situation. It is the implementation of key partnership working between the police and schools. The aim of sharing information with local schools is to allow 'Key Adults' the opportunity of engaging with the child and to provide access to support that allows them to remain in a safe but secure familiar environment.

In November 2025, a new statutory duty was placed on the police to notify a child's education setting, and where relevant, local authorities, if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. This includes all children connected to a household where they have attended a domestic abuse incident; children who are physically present at the incident, children not physically present during the incident, and situations where a child might reside in another household temporarily or permanently. Operation Encompass report over 2,000 notifications are made to settings every day.

Following the report of an incident of domestic abuse, by 9.00am on the next school day the school's Key Adult will be informed that the child or young person has been involved in a domestic incident. This knowledge, given to schools through Operation Encompass, allows the provision of immediate early intervention through silent or overt support dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

The purpose and procedures in Operation Encompass have been shared with all parents and governors, is detailed as part of this 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy' and is published on our school website.

At Lowton West Primary School our Key Adult is Mrs. N. Gould.

Key Safeguarding Areas

In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that the school has a responsibility to address and these include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking
- Child criminal exploitation
- All types of child-on-child abuse
- Domestic violence and abuse and intimate teenage relationship abuse
- So called Honour Based Abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Serious violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness

- Child and adolescent mental health
- Faith abuse
- Radicalisation
- Private fostering
- Online sexual abuse
- Online safety
- Attendance
- Children and the court system
- Sexual violence and harassment between children
- Children with a family member in prison
- Homelessness
- Alternative provision

For further information on these key topics please see Appendix A

Serious Violent Crime and Child Exploitation

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

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern

Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime or child exploitation.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions;
- associate with other children involved in exploitation;
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- misuse drugs and alcohol;
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- KCSiE 2026 guidance highlights that vulnerability of children involved in criminal exploitation is not always recognised by adults and professionals and that indicators of exploitation are different for boys and girls.

Indicators may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, going missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, 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.

Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis with the DSL taking a leading role, supported by other agencies such as Children's Social Care and the Police as required⁷.

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. It can be a one-off occurrence or might happen over time.

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment including Child on Child

The education setting recognises that allegations of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made.

Staff need to be aware of the changes to the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which criminalise the act of 'up skirting'. The Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) defines 'up skirting' as a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person's clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission. It is not only confined to victims wearing skirts or dresses and equally applies when men or women are wearing kilts, cassocks, shorts or trousers. It is often performed in crowded public places, for example on public transport or at music festivals, which can make it difficult to notice offenders.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video on their mobile phone, usually in a text message.

When people talk about sexting, they usually refer to sending and receiving:

- naked pictures or 'nudes'
- 'underwear shots'
- sexual or 'dirty pics'
- explicit 'rude' text messages or videos

If pupils are 'sexting' indecent images of someone under the age of 18, they may be committing a criminal offence under Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1978 and Section 160 Criminal Justice Act 1988. This means, it is a crime to:

- Take an indecent photograph or allow an indecent photograph to be taken;
- To make an indecent photograph (and this includes downloading or opening an image that has been sent);
- To distribute or show such an image;
- To possess with the intention of distributing images;
- To possess such images.

Whether someone is charged is decided by the Crown Prosecution Service. Generally, children are not prosecuted. HOWEVER, children and young people need to be aware that they may be breaking the law. Although unlikely to be prosecuted, children and young people who send or possess the images may be visited by Police and on some occasions media equipment e.g. computers and mobile phones could be removed.

The key factor to highlight is that the real harm in relation to 'sexting' is that those in the photographs may become victims should the images be shown to others.

Mental Health

School staff have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and well-being of their pupils.

Mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, signs of an eating disorder, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They can also 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, still have an important role to play.

Specifically, they can support the fulfilment of 4 key roles:

- promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness,
- observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one,
- ensuring early targeted support is provided, and
- liaison with/referral to specialist services where needed.

Where support is needed, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider whether to inform parents or carers to support the child's wellbeing, where doing so would not place the child at additional risk.

This requirement does not apply where a pupil's name is deleted after they have completed the final year at the school (e.g. Year 6 at a typical primary school) unless the local authority have asked to be informed about such deletions.

Whilst all staff are able to observe and support the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils and learners, schools also have a mental health lead in place, for Lowton West, Alesha Higgins (Pastoral/Safeguarding Manager) is the appointed/trained Senior Mental Health Lead. Mental Health leads support settings to embed a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The mental health lead supports the mental health and well-being of both children and staff within the school setting.

Schools can also access advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support. Additional guidance and resources can be found on the Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges website on GOV.UK. The department has also published advice and guidance on Preventing and tackling bullying.

The NHS Every Mind Matters website also contains helpful information and advice about Looking after a child or young person's mental health. In addition, the Hub of Hope is the UK's

leading mental health support database. It brings local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support and services together in one place, so that anyone struggling can find the most appropriate support.

Staff work together with the DSL/Senior Mental Health Lead to ensure pupils with possible mental health problems are identified quickly, and support put in place, either internally through the school's Pastoral/Safeguarding Manager or external agencies. The DSL and Pastoral Safeguarding Manager are aware of routes to escalate concerns relating to mental health through the Wigan CAMHs team, school nurse and social care.

Further information can be found in the Appendices.

This policy also links to our policies on:

Positive Behaviour,
Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct (contained within the Staff Handbook),
Whistleblowing,
Anti-bullying,
Health, Safety and Welfare,
Allegations against staff,
Complaints,
Attendance,
Curriculum,
PSHE,
Teaching and Learning,
Administration of medicines,
Drug Education,
Sex and Relationships Education,
On-line Safety,
Use of mobile phone and camera policy,
Recruitment and Selection,
Intimate Care,
Missing Child policy (linked to the LA guidance on 'Children Missing Education'),
SEND,
Code of Conduct for Parents/ Carers,

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our child protection policy and procedures will be monitored and updated by:

- Governing Body visits to the education setting
- SLT drop ins and discussions with children, young people, and staff
- Pupil / student surveys and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of exclusion and attendance data
- Scrutiny of Governing Body minutes

- Logs of bullying / racist / behaviour incidents for Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body to monitor
- Review of parental concerns and parent / carer questionnaires
- Review of the use of intervention strategies such as nurture room and isolation room.

Corona Virus (COVID-19)

If school closed for further lockdown KCSiE (5) remains in force throughout the response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Our school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our Children and Young people. Where the DSL and safeguarding team, has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person and their family.

Details of this plan must be recorded as should a record of contacts made. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Our school also considers in these times, family circumstances can change quickly and therefore new families may arise as in need or vulnerable. We will keep communication with all families open which can include remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits which will be recorded.

We aim to engage with every family regularly through letters, emails, newsletters, telephone calls and through the school Spider App. The school office and Senior Leaders/ Pastoral Team will communicate with families in relation to home learning concerns and pastoral needs in response to parental concerns raised. Teachers will aim to speak directly to all families at least once every half term, although some families will be contacted more frequently and some on a weekly basis (dependent on the needs of the family). Where there is no evidence of pupils accessing the home learning provision, families will be contacted on a weekly basis. We will also ensure that families are aware of how they may contact our pastoral care/ safeguarding team for support. This will be via letters, emails and the school website. Our Mental Health and Well-Being Practitioner will keep in weekly contact with the families she is supporting and the Wigan Family Welfare Counsellors will maintain fortnightly contact with the pupils currently accessing the counselling service.

Our school will share safeguarding and pastoral support messages on its website and social media pages. We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. We will take this into consideration when providing work and updates families and students.

As a school will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and where appropriate recorded.

Corona Virus (COVID-19) returning to school

The Department for Education has issued guidance for schools who are open during the pandemic.

DSL and DDSL's will be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate, and agencies and services should prepare to work together to actively look for signs of harm.

Our school understands that guidance from the government changes frequently and will continue to revise any Corona Virus addendums through the period of COVID-19.

Children Missing Education – Covid-19 Update

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days without authorisation the school and the local authority have a responsibility to jointly make reasonable enquiries to establish the

whereabouts of the child. We anticipate that after the enforced closure of schools for most pupils, coupled with increased anxiety about a return to school during the pandemic we will see an increase in the numbers of children who do not return immediately to school.

It is school's responsibility to follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner and every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. The CME checklist (see appendix) should be completed within 10 days and if the child is not located sent to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Team (MAST).

Appendix A

Appendix A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow this child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate, the police) is made immediately.

Types of abuse and neglect

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation, (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

Signs of Abuse in Children:

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour

Risk Indicators

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help" and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

Bruising

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby follow the Bruising Protocol in non mobile children.
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding.
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive).
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally.
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times.
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush.
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting.
- Bruising around the face.
- Grasp marks on small children.
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. Consideration should also be given to animal bites. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite or the circumstances around it.

Burns and Scalds

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine).
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements.
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area.
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation.
- Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

Fractures

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint.

Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

- There are grounds for concern if:
- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse.

The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

Recognising Neglect

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Children of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger child where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

Sexual Abuse by Young People

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. it may also be

that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed.

If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour. Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

Assessment of exploitation

In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- Consent – agreement including all the following:
- Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
- Knowledge of society’s standards for what is being proposed
- Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
- Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
- Voluntary decision
- Mental competence
- Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can take many forms, ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. CSE involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Indicators include:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections

- repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

Exploitation – CSE, Criminal, Human Trafficking, Modern Day Slavery, County Lines

Our education setting will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other key staff are trained in spotting the possible signs of exploitation outlined in Appendix one and two (this is not an exhaustive or definitive list)

Our school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other key staff are trained in spotting the possible signs of child sexual exploitation outlined in Appendix One (this is not an exhaustive or definitive list).

Our school safeguarding policy will align with the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership Guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation

http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_sg_ab_sexual_exploit.html#preventing

The referral pathway for children where concerns regarding Child Sexual Exploitation have been raised is via the Professional Referral Form

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/WSCB/Professionals/Report-it-as-a-professional.aspx>

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. Traffickers and slave drivers coerce, deceive and force individuals against their will into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. A large number of active organised crime groups are involved in modern slavery. But it is also committed by individual opportunistic perpetrators.

Modern slavery is the term used within the UK and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of:

- Slavery
- Servitude and Forced or Compulsory labour
- Servitude
- Human Trafficking

Slavery is: 'the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised'. (*Convention to Suppress the Slave Trade and Slavery 1926*)

Forced or Compulsory Labour is: 'all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily' (*Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, 1930 (No.29)*)
Labour is the provision of any service, not just manual labour.

Servitude is: 'an obligation to provide a service that is imposed by the use of coercion'.

Human Trafficking is: Although many people think of human trafficking as only affecting adults it affects children as well. Child trafficking is child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation.

It is also not just about trafficking adults and children across national borders, human trafficking can take place anywhere.

The trafficking of human beings involves the movement of a person from one place to another for the purpose of exploiting them using deception, coercion, the abuse of power or the abuse of someone's vulnerability. People can be trafficked in order to exploit them for sexual purposes, forced labour, domestic servitude or organ harvesting.

Although many people think of human trafficking as only affecting adults it affects children as well. Child trafficking is child abuse. Children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. They are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation. It is also not just about trafficking adults and children across national borders, human trafficking can take place anywhere.

Practice Reminder: The action that ALL staff and volunteers should take, if there are concerns about a child is to follow the procedure written in this policy, which is to pass the concerns to the DSL and complete a written record an Initial Concern Form.

Types of Human Trafficking

There are several broad categories of exploitation linked to human trafficking, including:

- Sexual exploitation
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Organ harvesting
- Child related crimes such as child sexual exploitation, forced begging, illegal drug cultivation, organised theft, related benefit frauds etc.
- Forced marriage and illegal adoption (if other constituent elements are present)

There are several broad categories of exploitation linked to modern slavery:

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation involves any non-consensual or abusive sexual acts performed without a victim's permission. This includes prostitution, escort work and pornography. Women, men and children of both sexes can be victims. Many will have been deceived with promises of a better life and then controlled through violence and abuse. It is also possible to exploit a person who consensually engages in providing sexual services.

Forced Labour

Forced/ compulsory labour involves victims being compelled to work very long hours, often in hard conditions without relevant training and equipment, and to hand over the majority if not all of their wages to their traffickers. The types of work and working environment can often be described as 'dirty, demeaning or dangerous'. Forced labour crucially implies the use of coercion and lack of freedom of choice for the victim. In many cases victims are subjected to verbal threats or violence to achieve compliance.

Manufacturing, entertainment, travel, farming and construction industries have been found to use forced labour by victims of human trafficking in various extents. There has been a marked increase in reported numbers in recent years. Often large numbers of people are housed in single dwellings and there is evidence of 'hot bunking', where a returning shift takes up the sleeping accommodation of those starting the next shift.

The International Labour Organisation [ILO] has identified six elements which individually or collectively can indicate forced labour. These are:

- Threats or actual physical harm
- Restriction of movement and confinement to the workplace or to a limited area
- Debt-bondage
- Withholding of wages or excessive wage reductions that violate previously made agreements
- Retention of passports and identity documents (the workers can neither leave nor prove their identity status)
- Threat of denunciation to the authorities regardless of whether the worker holds legal status in the UK or not.

Domestic Servitude

Domestic servitude involves the victim being forced to work in private households. Their movement will often be restricted and they will be forced to perform household tasks such as child care and house-keeping over long hours and for little if any pay. Victims will lead very isolated lives and have little or no unsupervised freedom. Their own privacy and comfort will be minimal, often sleeping on a mattress on the floor in an open part of the house. In rare circumstances where victims receive a wage it will be heavily reduced, as they are charged for food and accommodation.

Organ Harvesting

Organ harvesting involves trafficking people in order to use their internal organs for transplant. The illegal trade is dominated by demand for kidneys. These are the only major organs that can be wholly transplanted with relatively few risks to the life of the donor.

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. Consideration should be given to the trafficking element of this area of safeguarding and if appropriate a referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism. Staff should be aware of the Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

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.

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of Criminal Exploitation / County Lines.

Indicators Include:

- Returning home late, staying out all night or going missing
- Being found in areas away from home
- Increasing drug use, or being found to have large amounts of drugs on them
- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Unexplained absences from school, college, training or work
- Unexplained money, phone(s), clothes or jewellery
- Increasingly disruptive or aggressive behaviour
- Using sexual, drug-related, or violent language you would not expect them to know
- Coming home with injuries or looking particularly disheveled
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit for Professionals

Gangs and youth violence

Teachers and designated staff have a range of powers in relation to discipline to tackle problems, including violence, in the school environment. Such powers cover disciplinary actions, the power to restrain violent pupils, and the power to search pupils for prohibited items.

Serious Violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Schools play a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending. Schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school).

Early, evidence-based support for those considered at risk, as well as at critical points when

concerns emerge, is vital. This includes access to trusted adults, social and emotional skill support, and, where available, targeted interventions such as mentoring or therapeutic support (practical guidance on evidenced support is available from the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) (the “what works” centre for preventing violence).

Designated safeguarding leads can find further guidance on referrals and when to contact the police in (Manage Referrals Annex B KCSiE 2026).

KCSiE 2026 Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse, exploitation, and safeguarding issues. School leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read Annex A.

All staff should be aware of the signs that indicate a child is at risk of, or involved with serious violence, this includes: absence from school, change of friendship group, unexplained injuries, self-harm, unexplained gifts or possessions.

Staff should be aware of the risk factors that might increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence. Risk factors may include:

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent, suspended or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- Having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence, and
- Having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

Staff should also be aware of relevant guidance: Preventing youth violence and gang involvement

Drugs

As part of school's duty to promote pupils' wellbeing, we have a role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of our pastoral responsibilities (health and wellbeing/Healthy Schools) and to support the Government's drug strategy (2017). Our school will support students by providing information, advice and support via the curriculum and give students the confidence, resilience and risk management skills to resist risky behaviours and recover. The Department of Education and Association of Chief Police Officers have provided Drug Advice for Schools to support this aim. Schools also have the power to search pupils for drugs where there is a belief this student is in possession of criminal property.

Substance Misuse

Pupils affected by their own or other's drug misuse should have early access to support through the school's 'early help' offer and through referral to local drug and alcohol services.

As part of the statutory duty on schools to promote pupils' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities. Schools can have a key role in identifying pupils at risk of drug or alcohol misuse. The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between pupils who require general information and education, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support.

- Schools should provide accurate information on drugs and alcohol through education and targeted information, including via the FRANK service;
- Tackle problem behaviour in schools, with wider powers of search and confiscation;
- Work with local voluntary organisations, health partners, the police and others to prevent drug or alcohol misuse.
- To include this support for children as part of the 'early help' offer from the school.

Faith Abuse

Faith abuse is where certain kinds of child abuse are linked to faith or belief. This includes: belief in concepts of witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs), the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context); ritual or mutilations where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies; and use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

Child abuse can also occur in culture or faith contexts in general, this can include female genital mutilation, forced marriage, excessive physical punishment or abuse relating to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, disability or other differences recognised within social or cultural beliefs.

Abuse in any culture or faith context is not acceptable and is child abuse. School staff should follow the procedures and share any concerns with DSL and complete and Initial Concern Form, if it is suspected that a child is at risk of this type of abuse.

The National Action Plan to Tackle Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief is intended to help raise awareness of the issue of child abuse linked to faith or belief and to encourage practical steps to be taken to prevent such abuse. Schools should promote equality and awareness around cultural and religious practices.

Honour Based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' Abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

If you have concerns about an individual, the following helplines will be able to support you
Honour Network (Karma Nirvana): 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)
Government Forced Marriage Unit 0207 008 0151 or 0207 008 1500 (out of hours)

In emergencies, dial 999. The Home Office have produced further information on forced marriage.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, individuals and groups from the wider communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There are a range of potential risk indicators which may indicate that a child may be subjected to FGM or may have suffered FGM. These are detailed in the Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation issued by the home office.

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL/ DDSL with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police (KCSIE 2021). This should be completed in consultation with the DSL but the responsibility of reporting lies with the staff member who identified the concern.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the child – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a child's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the child
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps the child be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leon, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Disclosure

The 'One Chance' rule- As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges take action **without delay**.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 was amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015 where the law was extended to:

- A non-UK national who is 'habitually resident' in the UK and commits such an offence abroad can now face a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment. It is also an offence to assist a non-UK resident to carry out FGM overseas on a girl who is habitually, rather than only permanently, resident in the UK. This follows a number of cases where victims were unable to get justice as FGM was committed by those not permanently residing in the UK;

- A new offence is created of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM. Anyone convicted can face imprisonment for up to seven years and/or an unlimited fine;
- Anonymity for victims of FGM. Anyone identifying a victim can be subject to an unlimited fine.

Our school Designated Safeguarding Lead will maintain up to date knowledge of and work in line with the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership Protocol to Female Genital Mutilation http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_fgm.html#local_terms

The school recognises and adheres to its mandatory duty to report any suspected or known cases of FGM about a female under 18 years old to the police.
If someone is at imminent risk of FGM, you should contact the police immediately.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmf@fco.gov.uk.

Key Principles

Forced marriage is a CRIME. It is a form of violence against women and men, and a serious abuse of human rights, and where a minor is involved, child abuse.

While it is important to have an understanding of the motives that drive parents to force their children to marry, these motives should not be accepted as justification for denying them the right to choose a marriage partner and enter freely into marriage.

A person's capacity to consent can change. With the right support and knowledge, a person with a learning disability may move from a position of lacking capacity to consent to marriage, to having capacity. However, some children and adults with learning disabilities are given no choice and/or do not have the capacity to give informed consent to marriage and all it entails.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of Forced Marriage, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 that requires a different approach (see following section).

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-Child Abuse includes:

- Bullying, including cyber bullying
- Physical Abuse including intimate partner abuse
- Sexual Violence including CSE, Sexual Harassment, Sexting and Upskirting
- Initiation and Hazing type violence including rituals, challenges, and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation as a way of initiating a person into a group
- Gang violence, threats or coercion

All schools are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010. Schools should tackle prejudice and promote understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The definition that has been adopted by the government and should be used when considering prejudice related incidents 'A prejudice related incident is any incident which is perceived to be prejudice by the victim or any other person'

Domestic violence, coercive control and abuse, Gender-based violence and teenage relationship abuse

Domestic abuse (over 16 years) and teenage relationship abuse (under 16 years) involves any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are, or have been in relationships or family members regardless of gender or sexuality and is applicable to teenagers as teenage relationship abuse or intimate partner abuse. The curriculum should enable children and adolescents to understand what constitutes a healthy relationship, consent and tackle gendered stereotypes.

Child on Child: Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

HSB, sexual violence and/or harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex. It can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children.

HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable. It is important that all children involved are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

Sexually harmful incidents should be viewed by professionals as a safeguarding concern and both victim and perpetrator should be supported. The school should have systems in place to support both students in the school setting to feel safe and heard should an incident occur.

Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence; that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it,
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported,
- recognising the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support their approach to minimising the risk of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence,
- challenging behaviours, potentially criminal in nature, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them, and
- taking a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual. All such

incidents require a safeguarding response, with a proportionate approach that considers the age, development, and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

Children who are victims of HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

Whilst any report of HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely girls will be the victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum¹³⁹, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found in Sexual development and behaviour in children | NSPCC Learning.

When assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical. Sexual behaviour between children may be considered harmful if there is a significant age difference, typically more than two years' difference or if one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child may also abuse an older child, especially if they hold power over them, e.g., due to a disability or physical size. Advice on responding to children who display sexualised behaviour is available in Responding to children who display sexualised behaviour.

HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. Children who display HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Online Sexual Abuse

Online sexual abuse involved the use of technology to manipulate, exploit, coerce or intimidate a child to (but not limited to) engage in sexual activity, produce sexual material/content, force a child to look at or watch sexual activities, encourage a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or groom a child in preparation for sexual abuse (either online or offline). It can also involve directing others to, or coordinating, the abuse of children online. As with other forms of sexual abuse, online abuse can be misunderstood by the child and others as being consensual, occurring without the child's immediate recognition or understanding of abusive or exploitative conduct. In addition, fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor. No child under the age of 18 can consent to being abused or exploited.

Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse, it can involve serious organised crime and it can be carried out by either adults or peer

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and offline and inside and outside of school. In this context it specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment.

Such behaviour can:

- violate a child's dignity,
- make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and
- create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, examples of sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothing or appearance and using sexualised names,
- sexual "jokes" or taunting,
- physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, or interfering with someone's clothes. Schools should assess when such behaviour crosses into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim,
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature,
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence, The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which amends the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to make upskirting a specific offence of voyeurism. The Act came into force on 12 April 2019.), and
- online sexual harassment, which may occur independently, or as a broader pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This may include:
 - consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes. *UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people* provides detailed advice for schools,
 - sharing of unwanted explicit content,
 - sexualised online bullying,
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media,
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
 - coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

It is important that schools consider sexual harassment in broad terms. If left unchallenged, it can foster a culture that normalises inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to sexual violence.

Sexual Violence

Schools and colleges should be aware that child-on-child sexual violence can and does occur, both inside and outside of school/college.

Sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003¹⁴⁵ as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE - Schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

What consent is: Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity, and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice:147

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity,
- the age of consent is 16, and
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They can also 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. 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 a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise.

These could include:

- significant changes in behaviour,
- ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- withdrawing from social situations,
- not wanting to do things they usually like, and
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, education staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. Schools and colleges should ensure that any interventions they offer are evidenced as safe and effective and appropriate for the need and phase of education.

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

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the DSL/DDSL.

If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our children's physical health, relationships, education and to achieving their potential. The school should promote positive self-esteem and tackling behaviours such as bullying that can impact a young person's self-esteem.

Pastoral care should be available to those with mental health concerns as well as staff being aware of pathways for young people to Early Help and CAHMS.

Fabricated or induced illness

This supplementary guidance, Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (2008), sets out a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together where illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child by a carer who has parenting responsibilities for them.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The department and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds who may be homeless and/ or require accommodation.

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act places a new duty on local housing authorities in England to notify educational institutions, health visiting services and general medical practices, when a child is placed in temporary accommodation. This notification should be made when consent has been given from the parent, those with parental responsibility or care of the child, or the child themselves in cases of 16–17-year-olds living independently from their parents.

The notification will enable school and college staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children at the earliest opportunity and support them to improve their outcomes. Whilst any discussion with the local housing authority should be progressed as appropriate, this notification does not, and should not, replace existing safeguarding and welfare duties nor a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Alternative Provision

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should therefore be satisfied that the placement meets the pupils needs.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing

bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. Schools should obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

The department has published voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision, alongside guidance to support schools and local authority commissioners in quality assuring providers. Local authorities may use the standards to develop a register of approved settings for use by schools. However, schools remain ultimately responsible for the provision they commission. This means schools must continue to carry out safeguarding checks and conduct their own due diligence to ensure that the provision is appropriate for meeting each child's individual needs.

Schools should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. They should regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. Reviews should be frequent enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

The department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- Alternative Provision, and
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

The department has also published voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision.

Children and the Court System

A child may at some point experience the court system for a number of different reasons this may include being a witness to a crime or it could be as a result of child care arrangement being made in the Family Court. Whatever the reasons it is important the child is supported through this process.

There are two age appropriate guides that support children, 5-11 year olds (HM Courts and Tribunal Service, 2017a) and 12 to 17 year olds (HM Courts and Tribunal Service, 2017b).

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is available.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. Staff at Lowton West Primary School will follow the relevant guidance in order to support pupils who have a parent in prison.

The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative

consequences for those children.

Additional information about key safeguarding areas can also be found in KCSiE 2026 - Annex A.

Appendix B

Key Documentation, procedures and guidance

- [Advice to schools and colleges on gang and youth violence \(2013\)](#)
- [Alternative provision \(2016\)](#)
- [Behaviour and discipline in schools \(2016\)](#)
- [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#)
- [Corona Virus support for parents and carers to keep children safe online \(2020\)](#)
- [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines \(2017\)](#)
- [Designated teacher for looked after children \(2018\)](#)
- [DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools \(2012\)](#)
- [**Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(2018\)**](#)
- [**Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school \(2013\)**](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England \(2017\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Covid Addendum \(2020\)](#)
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers \(2018\).](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information \(2015\)](#)
- [**Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(2020\)**](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(2017\)](#)
- [Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales \(2023\).](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after children \(2018\)](#)
- [Protocol for injuries on non mobile children \(2017\)](#)
- [Safeguarding Children with fabricated or induced illness \(2008\)](#)
- [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice \(2018\)](#)
- [**SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years \(2015\)**](#)
- [School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures \(2013\)](#)
- [**Supervision of activity with children \(2012\)**](#)
- [**Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(2015\)**](#)
- [**Teaching online safety in schools**](#)
- [**The Equality Act \(2010\)**](#)
- [The Teachers' Standards \(2013\)](#)
- [Use of Reasonable Force in Schools \(2013\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners \(2015\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#)

Glossary

A Child	A person who has not yet reached their 18 th birthday.
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.
Bullying & Cyberbullying	Behaviour that is: • repeated • intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally • often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
Child on Child Abuse	Child on child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by another child, everyone directly involved in child on child abuse is under the age of 18.
Child Protection	Activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
Child sexual exploitation (CSE)	Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Children with Special Educational Needs and/or	SEN - a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
Disabilities	Disability - a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
County Lines	Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' or deal lines to supply drugs

Contextual Safeguarding	Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.
Criminal Exploitation	Involves young people under the age of 18 in exploitative situations, relationships or contexts, where they may be manipulated or coerced into committing crime on behalf of an individual or gang in return for gifts, these may include: friendship or peer acceptance, but also cigarettes, drugs, alcohol or even food and accommodation.
Domestic Abuse	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 • emotional
Early Help	Intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and families with a population most at risk of developing problems. Effective intervention may occur at any point in a child or young person's life.
Emotional Abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done.

Gangs & Youth Violence	Defining a gang is difficult. They tend to fall into three categories; peer groups, street gangs and organised crime groups. It can be common for groups of children and young people to gather together in public places to socialise, and although some peer group gatherings can lead to increased antisocial behaviour and low level youth offending, these activities should not be confused with the serious violence of a Street Gang. A Street Gang can be described as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of children who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity. An organised criminal group is a group of individuals normally led by adults for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise).
Hate	Hostility or prejudice based on one of the following things: • disability • race • religion • transgender identity • sexual orientation.
Honour-based violence	Honour based violence is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community.
Neglect	Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: • Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger. • Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers). • Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. • It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
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.
Private Fostering	A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)

Radicalisation & Extremism	Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
Relationship Abuse	Teen relationship abuse consists of the same patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour as domestic abuse. These patterns might include some or all of the following: sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse and psychological abuse.
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	• protecting children from maltreatment; • preventing impairment of children's health or development; • ensuring 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.
Sexting	Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, and laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.
Sexual Abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) 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 and all staff should be aware of it and of their school policy and procedures for dealing with it.
Trafficking	Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control of another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or removal of organs.

Appendix C

Operation Encompass Teachers' Helpline

Details of the Operation Encompass Helpline can be found here –
<https://www.operationencompass.org/>

If you wish to speak to an educational/child psychologist following an Encompass referral you are now able to contact the Operation Encompass Teachers' National Helpline, 8.00am to 11.00am, Monday to Friday on 0845 646 0890

Online key adult training

<https://www.operationencompass.org/operation-encompass-on-line-key-adult-briefing>

APPENDIX D



To: All Schools and Academies

Our reference: HRES

Your

reference:

Please ask

for:

Extension:

Direct line:

Date:

HR Employment
Services

2333

01942 827333

04 September 2025,
reissued 11 January
2026

Dear Colleague

DBS Checks for School Visitors

I write to confirm the situation regarding safeguarding checks for Wigan Council employees who visit and work in schools and settings.

I can confirm that any visitor who is employed directly by Wigan Council will have had their post assessed for eligibility for a DBS check along with other pre-employment checks, including an assessment of the work they do directly in schools and settings.

I can therefore confirm that council employees whose post requires a DBS check would not have been employed without an acceptable clearance being received. Therefore, if your visitor is a current Wigan Council employee you can be assured that they have received the appropriate clearances, which may include a DBS check (role dependant) in line with the national safeguarding guidance and this letter will provide the evidence you will require for your records. You should of course check their Wigan Council badge to confirm their identity.

I hope you find this advice useful. If you have any questions or wish to clarify any areas, please contact me. As lead counter signatory, I am available to provide advice on any DBS issues you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Hibbert
Lead Counter Signatory

Please reply to: HR Employment Services
Phone: 01942 827333
E-mail: payrollteam@wigan.gov.uk
www.wigan.gov.uk

APPENDIX E

Hindley Campus, Leyland Park House, Park Road, Hindley, Wigan WN2 3RX.
Warrington Campus, 28 Church Road, Warrington, Wigan, WN1 3UR

T: 01942 662366 hindleyoffice@three.net



August 2026

Dear Colleague

Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment: Letter of Assurance

We confirm that as an Ofsted registered provider and just as in other publicly funded schools and in accordance with the requirements of the DfE guidance ***Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026)*** [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#) and the [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Three Towers AP Academy has undertaken all the necessary safeguarding, safer recruitment, vetting and barring checks for all employees. This includes enhanced DBS Disclosures for eligible roles undertaking Regulated Activity.

It is a mandatory requirement that all staff undertake Level 2 Safeguarding training, which is updated annually. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and the designated deputy leads all undertake Level 3 child protection training which is updated every two years with refresher training annually.

All staff have read and understand KCSIE part 1 and are aware of their responsibilities set out in [Working together to safeguard children 2026: a guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children](#) and [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

We also confirm that all Three Towers staff have read and will comply with The Rowan Learning Trust's Code of Conduct.

Finally, in accordance with the requirements of the DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, we can confirm that Three Towers maintains our own single central record and obtains appropriate risk assessments, insurance certification and safeguarding assurances from vocational providers.

Yours faithfully

Miss A. Isherwood
Headteacher

Mr P Rimmer
CEO The Rowan Learning Trust