



Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

Date: Spring 2026

Review date: Autumn 2026



Little Bears @ Brierley

Nurture, Aspire, Believe, Achieve

At Brierley Primary School the named personnel with designated responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Safeguarding Governor
Mrs H Cunningham	Mrs C McIntosh Mrs J Faddes	Mr C Parker

The named personnel with designated responsibility regarding allegations against staff/those working in the school are:

Designated Senior Manager (normally the Head teacher)	Chair of Governors (in the event of an allegation against the Head teacher)
Mrs C McIntosh	Mr M Birchall

The named person with designated responsibility regarding Cared for children is:

Designated teacher for cared for children
Mrs H Cunningham
Mental Health Lead
Mrs H Cunningham

Brierley Primary School has adopted the Cheshire East model safeguarding policy, personalising it to the policy and procedures in our school.



1. Introduction:

At Brierley Primary School we recognise the responsibility we have under Section 175 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Governing Body in our school approve the S175/157 return to the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) on a yearly basis.

This policy demonstrates the school's commitment and compliance with safeguarding legislation; it should be read in conjunction with:

- Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) procedures
- Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Keeping children safe in education 2025
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill: child's rights impact assessment – March 2025
- The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide – March 2025
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused. 2015
- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK Updated September 2025
- Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and staff DFE 2022
- Safer Working Practice Guidance for those working with children and young people in education settings May 2022

- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK
- Gender Questioning Guidance Guidance for Schools and Colleges: Gender Questioning Children - Department for Education - Citizen Space (awaiting publication)
- School Mental Health Policy (EHS provided a model policy)
- School Relationships (and Sex) Education Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff use of mobile phones and Social Media Policy
- "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE July 2017
- School and Colleges: When to call the police
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (publishing.service.gov.uk) – July 2022

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals in this school make sure their approach is child centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. The term children include everyone under the age of 18.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Through our day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and refer them to Children's Services (in Cheshire East or in neighbouring authorities dependent upon the child's area of residence). We recognise that we form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This responsibility also means that we are aware of the behaviour of staff in the school; we maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.

In our school we ensure that:

- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, are treated equally and have equal rights to protection
- All staff act on concerns or disclosures that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Pupils and staff involved in Safeguarding issues receive appropriate support.
- Staff adhere to a Code of Conduct and understand what to do in the event of any allegations against any adult working in the setting
- All staff are aware of Early Help and ensure that relevant assessments and referrals take place.
- All staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label; they recognise that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another

Adults understand that children's poor behaviour may be a sign they are suffering harm or that they have been traumatised by abuse.

This policy is available on our school website and printed copies of this document are available to parents upon request. We inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction, alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. The Safeguarding induction will cover online safety, which details expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, role of DSL, Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annexe B, pupil behaviour policy (including bullying) safeguarding response for those children who go missing from education, staff code of conduct (including whistleblowing and social media)

In addition, all staff are provided with at least Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and Annexe B and are required to sign to indicate that they have read and understood it. Annexe B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Schools and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read Annexe B.

The Designated Lead is able to support all staff in understanding their responsibilities and implementing it in their practice.

2.0 Aims of this document:

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.
- To raise awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection.
- To promote safe practice and encourage challenge for poor and unsafe practice.
- To promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially with Children's social services and the Police.
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of our procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children
- To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support pupils who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. Child in Need/ Child Protection Plan.

3. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all members of the school community (including staff, pupils, volunteers, parents/carers, visitors, agency staff and students, or anyone working on behalf of Brierley Primary School)

This policy is consistent with Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership(CESCP) child protection procedures.

4. Definitions of terms used in this document:

Child Protection: refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

Protecting children from maltreatment

Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Family Help: means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

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. 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.

Staff: refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school/education setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity, full time or part time. This also includes parents and Governors.

Child: refers to all young people who have not yet reached the age of 18. On the whole, this will apply to pupils from our own school; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

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

Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) is the sharing of sexual imagery (photos or videos) by children

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

The local authority (LA)

A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA

The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

5. Prevention:

Children feel secure in a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. We achieve this by ensuring that:

- Children develop realistic attitudes to their responsibilities in adult life and are equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe; including understanding and recognition of healthy/unhealthy relationships and support available.
- Children are supported in recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet, being able to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable, recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being and supporting them in developing effective ways of resisting pressure.
- 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.
- Importance and prioritisation is given to equipping the children with the skills needed to stay safe; including providing opportunities for Personal, Social and Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education throughout the curriculum.
- We ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place; however we are careful that "over blocking" does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- All adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with "respectful uncertainty" as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children.
- Emerging themes are proactively addressed and fed back to the local authority and LSCB to ensure a coherent approach so that multi-agency awareness and strategies are developed.
- There is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded and there is a standalone policy which is robustly delivered throughout the school and curriculum.

- Support and planning for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the school community is undertaken, where necessary, as part of our inclusive approach.
- We comply with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2023 and support the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP [multi-agency threshold framework](#)) Timely Support for Children and Families in Cheshire East, this document supports professionals to access the right help and support for children and their families at the right time. We systematically monitor pupil welfare, keeping accurate records, speaking to parents and notifying appropriate agencies when necessary
- All staff are aware of children with circumstances which mean that they are more vulnerable to abuse/less able to easily access services and are proactive in recognising and identifying their needs
- All staff are 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. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened; this could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication whilst ensuring safer working practices.
- The voice of the child is paramount; therefore, our pupils are actively involved in safeguarding development. There is an established student group/student involvement mechanism which works with and challenges staff in order to develop aspects of safeguarding e.g. through the curriculum, approaches and displays.
- We consult with, listen, and respond to pupils; our school's arrangements for this are monthly meetings with the school safeguarding team who discuss how to make our school an even safer place to be.
- We use research evidence to inform our prevention work.

6. Early Help:

All staff understand the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) 'Threshold of Need Guidance' and Child Protection procedures; Right Help, Right Time - Delivering effective support for children and families in Cheshire East, Multi Agency Threshold of Need Guidance – (see link in previous section) to ensure that the needs of our children are effectively assessed; decisions are based on a child's development needs, parenting capacity and family & environmental factors. We ensure that the most appropriate referrals are made. We actively support multi agency planning for these children and, in doing so, provide information from the child's point of view; bringing their lived experience to life as evidenced by observations or information provided. Staff know how to pass on any concerns no matter how trivial they seem.

Staff members always act in the interests of the child and are aware of their responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. In our school staff are aware that they must be prepared to identify those children who may benefit from Family Help.

The staff are alert to the potential need for Family Help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health needs and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer

- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups and county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a 'privately fostered child', or
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day

If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether the Family Help approach should be considered. Staff are aware that early identification of concerns and the use of Family Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

The multi-agency threshold framework is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. This support can be provided on a single agency basis or a multi-agency basis. The stepped approach aims to reduce risk and vulnerability and meet needs at the appropriate level of support and/or intervention. Access to effective early intervention and prevention services is essential to achieving this.

Our school is an Operation Encompass school which means that we are able to give proactive support to those children and their families where domestic abuse is identified

If a member of staff has concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. Where possible, there should be a conversation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to agree a course of action, although any staff member can make a referral to Children's Social Care/consult with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)/contact the police. Other options could include referral to specialist services or family help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by Cheshire East's Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The pyramid of support (see supporting documentation below) will help us to identify what advice and guidance is available and who to contact at each different level on the continuum of need. The Family Hub is now implemented across Cheshire East will strengthen existing partnerships in each locality making it easier for practitioners to get support for families. Family hubs support children and young people from 0-19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities)

In the first instance staff should discuss 'Early Help' requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If family help is appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead will support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

As staff may be required to support other agencies and practitioners and parents /carers and children in an extra help plan or targeted help plan, all staff are aware of the relevant assessments and appropriate support is given to them when they undertake an early help assessment. We have a suite of screening tools which may also help to identify the level of need, the best pathway of support, and the interventions you can be provided for children, young people and families.

cescp.org.uk/docs/multi-agency-toolkit/ce-scp-multi-agency-toolkit-final-oct-2021.docx

Concerns assessed as being at **lower tier Targeted Help** level for complex early help concerns will be triaged and managed by the **Family Help front door**.

Where early help and or other support is appropriate, we ensure that the situation for the child is kept under constant review. If the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving, we take appropriate action.

The children in our school are made aware that there are adults whom they can approach if worried or in difficulty.

7. Early Help, Child in Need and Child Protection

In our school we ensure that we follow Cheshire East's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and the Practice Standards to ensure that our work, on behalf of our children, is of a consistently good standard. We use these standards to challenge other workers on behalf of children where the standards are not being met. The Headteacher and the DSL are aware of the Cheshire East Escalation Procedure Procedure for Multi-Agency Professional Challenge and... (trixonline.co.uk)

8. Concerns about a child- recording and reporting:

Our recording procedures are in line with those outlined in Cheshire East's "Recording and Reporting Guidance" 2025; the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead are aware of this document.

We follow the non-statutory Information Sharing Guidance when making decisions about whether to share information [DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers](#)

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm they should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy, without delay. A written record should be made of these concerns as soon as possible following the disclosure/concern being raised; this must be on the same working day.

Where staff have conversations with a child who discloses abuse they follow the basic principles:

- listen rather than directly question, remain calm
- never stop a child who is recalling significant events
- never ask a child if they are being abused
- make a record of discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (child language – do not substitute words)
- advise you will have to pass the information on
- avoid coaching/prompting
- never take photographs of any injury
- never undress a child to physically examine them
- allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support meetings
- At no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult.

Staff are aware that they should not question the child; other than to respond with TED - **T**ell me what you mean by that, **E**xplain what you mean by that, **D**escribe that. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

The Designated Lead will obtain the relevant information and agree relevant actions after making a timely assessment of the information.

We recognise that parents may hold key information about incidents/allegations therefore, in the majority of situations; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the parents and gain their

consent to discussing the situation with others. Staff are aware that there will be very few instances where, to speak to the parents, could further endanger the child. In those situations they would still consult/refer, but would have clearly recorded reasons as to why they had not gained parental consent.

The following situations are the instances in which parental consent would not be gained prior to a referral:

- Discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry
- Sexual abuse is suspected
- Organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- Fabrication of an illness is suspected
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is suspected
- Forced marriage is suspected
- Honour Based Abuse
- Extremism or radicalisation is suspected.
- County Lines activities are suspected

Staff are also aware that, even in situations where the parent does not give consent, the best interests of the child are paramount therefore they would share their concerns. In addition, the referral will not be delayed if it has not been possible to contact the parents/carers.

For non-urgent contact for a referral or request to the front door, the **appropriate portal form** needs to be completed. There is one for children's social care where you feel the child / young person has reached their threshold for support (**upper tier Targeted Help and Statutory / Specialist Help**).

Phone – Immediate Safeguarding concerns:

0300 123 5012

Option 3 – Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

Choose Option 2 – ChECS / Immediate Safeguarding concerns

Anything you submit to ChECS that is deemed as meeting threshold for social care will be processed within either 2 hours or 24 hours as per statutory guidelines dependant on risk.

A consultation will take place with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and/or the police immediately. Where a child lives in a different authority the Designated Lead follows the procedures for that authority.

Where possible we ensure that contacts with outside agencies are through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy; however staff are aware that anyone can make this contact. Where a member of staff makes contact they ensure that they make the Designated Safeguarding Lead aware as soon as possible.

Safeguarding records are held electronically. Safeguarding and Child Protection records are stored securely and are separate from the main pupil file. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, information should be kept confidential.

All records provide a factual, accurate, evidence-based account. Records are signed, dated and where appropriate, witnessed.

The school ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ensuring that information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

We ensure that information is transferred safely and securely when a pupil with a Safeguarding Record transfer to another school. We also ensure that Key Workers or Social Workers are notified where a child leaves the school (as appropriate). Where children leave the school or college, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their safeguarding file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. Within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This allows the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. See the Cheshire East Record Keeping Guidance.

9. Safer working practices

Use of mobile phones, cameras and internet:

The school and staff take safeguarding seriously and understanding this policy is overarching. We refer to the staff use of mobile phones and social media policy, code of conduct and Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in Education Settings May 2022'.

Personal mobile and electronic devices:

Personal mobile phones and recording devices (tablets, cameras, laptops etc.) are never used with children around by staff at Brierley Primary School.

If staff have personal phones or devices these are stored away and will be switched off or on silent whilst during the teaching day. In exceptional circumstances permission by the Headteacher may be granted to have personal phones on their person.

Electronic devices should be password protected so that content cannot be accessed by unauthorised users.

It is the responsibility of all the staff members to ensure that there is no illegal or inappropriate content stored or used on their device when brought onto the school grounds.

School devices:

School devices remain the property of Brierley Primary School and in using them staff follow Brierley's Acceptable Use Policy. Staff must seek permission from the Headteacher if they need to take any devices off site.

Electronic devices should be password protected so that content cannot be accessed by unauthorised users.

Camera photography and images:

Brierley Primary School will obtain parents'/carers' consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).

Staff will ensure that Brierley Primary School's designated cameras or recording devices are used appropriately when capturing evidence of work undertaken.

Online safety:

On school equipment we ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

We refer you to our 'Online Safety Policy' which incorporates and considers the 4Cs as detailed in KCSIE 2025 to ensure an effective online policy.

The school's policy on the use of mobile and smart technology and their use reflects the fact many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. Our Personal Telephone Policy carefully considers how this is managed on the school premises.

Working off school premises:

Where staff take school computer / digital equipment / or records in paper form off school site, they do so with the view that they abide by Brierley's data protection policy as well as permission from the Headteacher.

Staff are reminded that information, both in paper or electronic form is sensitive and protected under data protection and should be safe and securely stored off the premises and during transport.

10. Allegations against staff

Support and advice is sought from Children's Services or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), and our Personnel/Human Resources advisor whenever necessary.

At Brierley Primary School we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children; that they may have

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

These can include incidents outside of school which do not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children

Any concerns of this nature, about the conduct of other adults, should be taken to the Headteacher without delay or, where that is a concern about the Headteacher, to the Chair of Governors and the LADO.

Staff are aware that this must be done on the same working day.

The school will not internally investigate until instructed by the LADO.

We make all staff aware of their duty to raise concerns. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them. They have been made aware of those other channels of support. Our Whistleblowing policy is visible in our school reception area, on our website and on the back of each staff toilet door.

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes allegations which do not meet the harms threshold, also known as low level concerns.

Low level concerns

We understand that the term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

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

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy

- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low level concerns will be reported in the same way as a concern in relation to concerns and allegations that meet the harms test i.e. to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, if the concern is about the headteacher.

Records of low-level concerns will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and responded to.

Where a pattern of behaviour is identified, the Head will decide on a course of action. This might be internal disciplinary procedures, or referral to the LADO if the harms threshold is met.

The Head will consider if there are any wider cultural issues in school that enabled the behaviour to occur and if appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of recurrence.

Relating to Organisations or Individuals using School Premises

If the schools receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), as with any safeguarding allegation, we will follow safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

11. Safer Recruitment

The school pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023 and with reference to the 'Position of Trust' offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. We do this by:

- Operating safer recruitment practices, following the guidance in Section 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and Section 3 The safeguarding and Welfare Requirements of the Early Years Foundations Stage Statutory Framework 2025 see page 46 and page 47
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers adhere to a published code of conduct and other professional standards at all times, including after school activities. Staff are aware of social media/ on-line conduct.
- Ensuring that all staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with pupils and parents, following the Code of Conduct.
- Requiring all staff to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting). Disqualification under the Child Care Act 2006 (amended following the 2018 Regulations)
- Implementing thorough procedures for "Disqualification by association", ensuring that this is recorded on the single central record and staff know that they need to alert the head should there be any change in their circumstances which might impact.
- Maintaining an accurate, complete, up to date Single Central Record.

12. Staff training and updates:

In our school there is a commitment to the continuous development of all staff, regardless of role, with regard to safeguarding training:

All staff undertake Effective Safeguarding (previously known as Basic Awareness) training within the first term of their employment/placement. *(state who provides this)* This training is refreshed every 3 years to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively

The Designated Lead and any Deputy attend CЕСP multi agency Safeguarding and child protection training on an annual basis.

EYFS Training requirements:

Effective Safeguarding (previously known as Basic Awareness) training for EYFS practitioners is renewed every two years.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) provides support, advice and guidance to all practitioners on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The DSL and their deputies attend a training course consistent with the criteria set out in Annex C (of EYFS 2025)

All practitioners are trained in line with the criteria set out in Annex C. We ensure that practitioners are supported and confident to implement the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures on an ongoing basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, and/or Deputy attend the Designated Safeguarding Leads Meetings held each term coordinated by the SCiES Team, therefore enabling them to remain up to date with Safeguarding practices and be aware of any emerging concerns/themes emerging with Cheshire East.

The school acknowledges serious case review findings and shares lessons learned with all staff to ensure no child falls through the gaps.

13. Cared for children (Looked after children) and previously cared for children

In Brierley Primary School, we ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep Cared for Children safe as we are aware that children often become cared for as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We have identified a designated teacher for our Cared for Children; this person works closely with the Virtual school.

14. Children with special needs and disabilities

We ensure that staff are aware that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. We ensure that staff have knowledge and understanding of the additional barriers which can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special needs/disabilities.

These barriers can include:

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

We aim to build the necessary skills in staff so that they can safeguard and respond to the specific needs of this group of children.

15. The use of 'reasonable force'

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children. 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. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

We have a key emphasis on de-escalation and only use physical touch to prevent a child or others being harmed. If we do this, we ensure that it is for the shortest time necessary.

Where it has been necessary to use physical intervention, we ensure the following:

- the child's wellbeing after the event is monitored and supported
- parents are fully briefed
- the incident is fully recorded including antecedents, de-escalation attempted, and holds used.
- an individual plan is agreed and recorded so that it is clear what will happen should a similar situation arise in the future
- any incident involving the restraint of a child is always reported to an identified senior manager

16. Private Fostering

Private Fostering is a type of 'Kinship Care'. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 provides further examples of this type of care and information and guidance around supporting children living in these arrangements. To support kinship carers, the role of virtual heads has been extended to supporting every child in the care of friends or family.

We recognise that our school has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when we become aware of, or suspect that, a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. To aide our awareness we ensure that we establish parental responsibility for each and every child; we take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child when we register them.

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.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents (by marriage or where a legal order has been made, such as a Child Arrangement Order); it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, we recognise that they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of private fostering arrangements, they are aware that they need to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform Cheshire East. The school would also inform Cheshire East of the private fostering arrangements.

Private Fostering is a type of 'Kinship Care'. Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023 provides further examples of this type of care and information and guidance around supporting children living

in these arrangements. Virtual school heads were originally responsible for promoting the educational achievements of youngsters who are, or have been, in care and managing their pupil premium funding. Since 2021, their remit has included championing those who have, or previously had, a social worker – which included many who are being cared for by loved ones other than their parents. Now to support kinship carers, the role of virtual heads will be extended to supporting every child in the care of friends or family.

17. Children who are absent from education

Under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 we have a duty to investigate any unexplained absences especially as a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

Even though it is not compulsory for a child to attend Little Bears Nursery, at the very least, good attendance practice promotes good outcomes for children and can lead to the early identification of more serious concerns for a child.

Our setting has an **Attendance Policy** that we share with parents and/or carers. *(Policy can be found on our school website)*

At Brierley Primary School, we follow Cheshire East's procedures for dealing with children that are absent or who go missing from lessons and/or school. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly or prolonged, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. We will refer to: Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) updated August 2024

We also ensure that we are rigorous in our attendance procedures; these are outlined in our Attendance Policy. Where a child's destination is unknown when they have left our school, we ensure we carry out all necessary checks and refer them as Children Missing Education (CME), using the appropriate notification form on the Cheshire East website, so that they can be followed up on. Staff are aware of the trafficking of children and the importance of rigour around our attendance procedures to reduce this as a threat to our children's safety.

Alternative Provision

If our pupils are accessing an alternative provision, we:

- gain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate staff safeguarding checks have been carried out, as well as written information about any arrangements that may put the child at risk
- have records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend
- regularly review any alternative provision placements to make sure the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs.

If safeguarding concerns occur, we are mindful that the placement should be immediately reviewed and ended if necessary.

18. Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads will be aware of the fact a child has a social worker and will use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Where children need a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

19. Children requiring mental health support

We recognise that schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

Staff are aware of how experiences of children can affect emotional wellbeing, mental health and school attendance. We acknowledge that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

We ensure we have specific training and clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

20. Educational Outcomes

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead ensures that staff know the children who have experienced or are experiencing welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues so that, as relevant, we know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment; this means that we are able to make necessary adjustments to help these children to achieve. In this way we maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort. This includes children with a social worker and those previously known to social care; we ensure that teachers are made aware of those children in this category.

21. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues. They are aware that these safeguarding issues may not directly involve the child in our school but could be happening to their siblings or parents; this includes the importance of understanding intra-familial harms and support for siblings where there is intrafamilial harm. They are also aware that some issues could be happening in the lives of staff members.

Staff are supported in accessing and completing the relevant screening tools:

[CE SCP Multi-Agency Toolkit](#)

As a listening school staff would pick up on these issues and would know how to identify and respond to:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Child abduction/community safety issues
- Children and the Court System
- Children with family member in prison
- Homelessness
- Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both pupil and parent)
- Child sexual exploitation / trafficked children
- Criminal Exploitation including county lines and serious violence
- Extremism and Radicalisation
- Children who are absent from education
- Domestic abuse
- Child-on-child relationship abuse/Teenage Relationship Abuse
- Child on child abuse
- Risky behaviours
- Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Sexual health needs
- Obesity/malnutrition
- Online grooming

- Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children
- Bullying including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying. Breaches of the Equality Act 2010
- Mental health issues including Self-Harm
- Honour based abuse including - Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Ironing, Forced Marriage
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- Child Trafficking
- Modern Day Slavery

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, deliberately missing education and sharing nudes or semi-nudes put children in danger.

22. Governor Responsibilities

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart. (KCSiE 2025)

As a school we ensure that the Governing bodies and proprietors ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. KCSiE 2025 highlights "This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding".

The Governing Board fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Government guidance.

The Governing Board have agreed processes which allow them to monitor and ensure that the school:

- Has robust Safeguarding procedures in place
- Operates safe recruitment procedures and carries out appropriate checks on new staff and adults working on the school site
- Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against any member of staff or adult on site
- Has a member of the Leadership Team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Safeguarding and Child Protection issues
- Takes steps to remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding Safeguarding arrangements
- Is supported by the Governing Board nominating a member responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse against the Headteacher; this is the Chair
- Carries out an annual review of the Safeguarding policy and procedures
- Carries out an annual Safeguarding Audit (Section 175 audit) in consultation with the Governing Board, sharing this with the CЕСSР on request.

Finally:

Staff in Brierley Primary School take the safeguarding of each child very seriously. This means that, should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected. This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly. They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.

Further information on our safeguarding and related policy documents and procedures is available on request from the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Further Forms of Abuse

Contextual Safeguarding

Including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse in which an individual or group exploits a power imbalance to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

CSE and CCE can affect children of any gender. They can also involve children being moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purposes of exploitation.

Different forms of harm often overlap. Perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse—such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, exploitation or abuse is in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or for the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, acting alone or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children who themselves may be experiencing exploitation. In such cases, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst a child's age may contribute to an imbalance of power, other factors can increase vulnerability to exploitation, including:

- sexual identity
- cognitive ability
- learning difficulties
- communication ability
- physical strength
- status
- access to economic or other resources

Indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation include children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- show changes in emotional wellbeing
- misuse drugs and alcohol
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- regularly miss education or do not take part in education

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Specific forms of CCE can include children:

- being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines
- working in cannabis factories

- shoplifting or pickpocketing
- being forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime
- threatening or committing serious violence towards others

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators may threaten victims (and their families) with violence or coerce them into debt. They may be pressured to carry weapons such as knives, or begin to carry a knife for a perceived sense of protection. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (particularly for older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they agreed or consented to.

The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be different to that of boys. Indicators may not be the same; however, professionals should recognise that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. Both boys and girls who are criminally exploited may also be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off incident and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media). 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 sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited (for example, they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship).

Additional indicators that may be present in CSE include children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections
- display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development
- become pregnant

County Lines

County lines describes gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phones or other "deal lines". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK—no specific distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance. Children can be targeted and recruited in various locations including mainstream and special schools, further and higher education institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes, and increasingly online via social media.

Children can easily become trapped as county lines gangs may manufacture drug debts which must be "worked off", or they may threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave.

In addition to the CSE/CCE indicators above, further signs that a child is criminally exploited through county lines include children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from home
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- receive requests for drugs via a phone line, move drugs, or hand over and collect money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as “plugging”, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation with which they have no connection (often called a “trap house” or “cuckooed” address) or in hotel rooms where there is drug activity
- owe a “debt bond” to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing

Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children: 5–11-year-olds and 12–17-year-olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures available. They include diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and explain the use of video links. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and may entrench conflict in families, which can be distressing for children.

The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on dispute resolution services. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. It can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents near a school can raise concerns among children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, walking to school alone), it is important they receive practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or local police staff. Lessons should focus on building children's confidence and abilities, rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Children Missing from Home or Care

Children who run away from home or care may be signalling that they are unhappy or do not feel safe where they live. Research shows children run away due to conflict or problems at home or school, neglect or abuse, or because they are being groomed by predatory individuals seeking to exploit them. Many run away repeatedly.

Definition (NPCC): *Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their wellbeing or otherwise confirmed.*

In any case of a missing child, both push and pull factors should be considered.

Push factors include:

- conflict with parents/carers
- feeling powerless
- being bullied/abused
- being unhappy/not being listened to
- the "Toxic Trio"

Pull factors include:

- wanting to be with family/friends
- drugs, money and other exchangeable items
- peer pressure
- for those trafficked into the UK as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, pressure to make contact with their trafficker

As a school we will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us). If the parent is unaware of the child's location and the definition of missing is met, we will support the parent to contact the police or take the relevant action ourselves.

Cyberbullying

Central to our school's anti-bullying policy is the principle that bullying is always unacceptable and that all pupils have a right not to be bullied.

We recognise bullying perpetrated outside school can spill over into school. We will therefore respond to any bullying, including cyberbullying, that we become aware of, carried out by pupils away from the site.

Definition: Cyberbullying is "an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend themselves."

By cyberbullying, we mean bullying via electronic media, including:

- texts, messages or calls on mobile phones
- use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites (including blogs, personal websites, social networking sites)
- using email to message others
- hijacking/cloning email accounts
- making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in online forums

Cyberbullying may reach a level where it is criminal. If we become aware of incidents, we will consider each case individually to determine whether a criminal act may have been committed. The school will pass information to the police if appropriate or required.

Domestic Abuse/Violence

Brierley Primary School believes all pupils have the right to be safe at school and at home. We are aware that children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, we are alert to indicators of abuse and have a planned, proactive approach to supporting children.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces the first statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact on children as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The term covers a range of abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse, and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed must be aged 16 or over and be “personally connected” (Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Section 2).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child-to-parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background, and it can take place inside or outside the home.

Domestic abuse affects significant numbers of children and their families, causing immediate harm and damaging future life chances. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships (“teenage relationship abuse”).

Domestic abuse negatively affects children. They are often more aware of what is happening than parents think. Responses vary by age, personality and support network; children recover best when helped to understand and process what is happening/has happened. Their experiences shape self-worth, identity and the ability to relate to others; this can make it harder to succeed at school and develop friendships.

To support our children, we:

- have an ethos placing children's wellbeing at the heart of all we do
- create a predictable school life with set routines
- ensure rules and expectations are clearly stated and understood
- understand that oppositional/manipulative behaviours may be attempts to control their world when much feels out of control
- model respectful and caring behaviour, positive conflict resolution and respectful interactions
- use the language of choice, making clear the benefits and consequences of choices, and follow through consistently
- support children to put feelings into words; build a vocabulary of emotions so they can express themselves appropriately
- understand a child may have conflicting and confusing emotions regarding their parents
- create opportunities for children to feel successful; show that they matter and take an active interest
- accept they may not be willing or able to talk about it immediately (or ever)
- provide effective non-verbal systems for accessing support

- reassure children that only those who need to know about an incident will be informed
- allow safe storage or shredding of intervention work where necessary
- maintain visible, accessible worry boxes/internal support systems and information on external support (e.g. Childline)
- provide opportunities to teach and discuss healthy and unhealthy relationships

Children, Young People and Domestic Abuse

Homelessness

Being homeless or at risk of homelessness presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Our designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) know contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority to raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

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

Some 16- and 17-year-olds may be living independently from parents/guardians (e.g. exclusion from the family home) and will require different intervention and support. Children's social care will be the lead agency and our DSL (or deputy) ensures appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, causing severe and adverse effects on emotional development. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate, or valued only as they meet another's needs
- denying opportunities to express views; deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate
- imposing age- or developmentally inappropriate expectations, including interactions beyond a child's capability, overprotection, limiting exploration and learning, or preventing normal social interaction
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or exploitation/corruption

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, although it may occur alone.

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA), Including Breast Ironing, FGM and Forced Marriage

Staff are aware that so-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves wider family/community pressure and multiple

perpetrators. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of motivation) and must be handled and escalated as such (KCSIE 2023). Awareness raising has taken place; staff are alert to indicators. Forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; it is a human rights abuse and falls within the CPS definition of domestic violence. HBA and forced marriage can affect both young men and women.

As a school we would never attempt to intervene directly; where suspected, we would speak to ChECS before sharing concerns with the family.

Breast Ironing (Breast Flattening)

An act of abuse performed on girls (from around age 9) in which breasts are ironed, massaged/pounded, burned with heated objects, or bound with an elastic belt to prevent or delay development—purportedly to protect the child from rape, forced marriage, sexual harassment or removal from education. It is a practice reported in Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa and is often carried out by the girl's mother. Staff follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting where this is suspected.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM (also known as female circumcision, cutting or Sunna) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Staff are aware that FGM:

- is child abuse; it is dangerous and a criminal offence. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given; however, there is no valid reason for it.
- is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do so.

Indications FGM may be about to take place include:

- a female family elder visiting from a country of origin
- references to a "special procedure" or occasion to "become a woman"
- a child requesting help if aware/suspects immediate risk
- parents stating the child/relative will be taken out of the country for a prolonged period
- talk of a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent
- withdrawal from PSHE/FGM learning

Indications FGM may have taken place include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spending longer than usual in the bathroom/toilet; bladder or menstrual problems
- noticeable behavioural changes after a lengthy absence
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help but not being explicit due to embarrassment or fear
- prolonged/persistent unexplained absence from school/college
- seeking to be excused from PE without GP support
- not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities

- close supervision by family/carers

Teachers are aware of responsibilities under the Serious Crime Act 2015 which states that if, in the course of their work, a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, they must report this to the police.

Forced Marriage

Since February 2023 it has been a crime to conduct any act intended to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even where violence, threats or other forms of coercion are not used. This applies to non-binding, unofficial "marriages" as well as legal marriages. Forced marriage occurs without the full and free consent of one or both parties and may involve violence, threats or any other form of coercion (physical, emotional or psychological).

Children—especially girls—who are forced to marry, or fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their development.

Possible indicators a child is at risk of forced marriage include:

- appearing anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn; low self-esteem
- self-harm, eating disorders
- criminal activity (e.g. shoplifting, drug/alcohol use)
- declining performance, aspirations or motivation
- not allowed to attend extra-curricular/after-school activities
- being accompanied to and from school/college
- attending school but absenting themselves from lessons
- ceasing school/college attendance
- family history of siblings leaving education early and marrying early

Actions our school takes regarding HBA:

- absence request forms ask about siblings in other schools to enable liaison
- the Headteacher meets parents to discuss extended leave in term time (to gather destination, purpose, fixed/estimated return date)
- we check in with children to corroborate the purpose of visits
- if a child does not return by a specified date, we contact our Attendance/Education Welfare Officer and make enquiries in line with Cheshire East Children Missing Education procedures, referring to the police and Children's Services where appropriate

Modern Slavery, Including Trafficking

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, servitude, forced criminality and organ removal.

Staff are aware that:

- a person commits an offence if they knowingly hold another in slavery/servitude or require forced/compulsory labour
- it is an offence to arrange/facilitate travel with a view to exploitation (serious offences carrying penalties up to life imprisonment)
- any consent victims give is irrelevant where obtained through coercion, deception or payment/benefit
- children (under 18) are considered victims of trafficking whether or not coerced, deceived or paid; recruitment/transport/harbours for exploitation suffices

Trafficked Children

UN definition (children): "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered a trafficking victim.

We are alert to signs in children and families, including those who:

- show signs of physical/sexual abuse; STIs; unwanted pregnancy
- have a history with missing links/unexplained moves
- are required to earn a minimum amount each day
- work in various locations; have limited freedom of movement
- are missing for periods; known to beg for money
- are cared for by adults who are not their parents with poor-quality relationships
- are one among several unrelated children at one address
- are not registered with/attending a GP practice
- are excessively afraid of deportation
- appear malnourished/unkept; withdrawn, anxious, unwilling to interact
- are under others' control and influence; live in cramped/overcrowded conditions
- have no access to or control of passports/identity documents
- avoid eye contact and appear untrusting; show signs of abuse/health issues

For children internally trafficked within the UK, indicators include:

- physical symptoms (e.g. bruising indicating assault)
- STIs or unwanted pregnancy
- credible reports suggesting sexual exploitation; being seen in locations known for exploitation
- drug/alcohol/substance misuse
- inappropriate clothing for age; borrowing clothing from older people
- relationship with a significantly older partner
- accounts of social activities/expensive items with no plausible funding source
- frequent missing episodes/overnights; late returns with no plausible explanation
- returning from missing episodes looking well cared for

- keys to unknown premises
- low self-image/esteem; self-harm; eating disorders; promiscuity
- truancy/disengagement with education
- entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- going missing and being found in areas with no known links
- inappropriate internet use; forming online relationships, particularly with adults

These behaviours do not in themselves prove trafficking but should be treated as indicators. Suspicions will be reported to the DSL and treated as potential abuse.

Neglect

Staff are aware that neglect:

- is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development
- may occur during pregnancy (e.g. due to maternal substance abuse)
- may involve failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home/abandonment); protect from harm/danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- may include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs
- may be fatal; causes great distress; and leads to poor outcomes short- and long-term
- may result in health/mental health problems, attachment difficulties, lower educational achievement, increased substance misuse, higher risk of further abuse, and difficulties in parenting later life (impact depends on type, severity, frequency and available support/coping)

If we suspect neglect, we will use the CЕСP Neglect Screening Tool.

Online Safety

With the pace of online change, some practitioners, parents and carers may have limited understanding of risks/issues. Parents may underestimate how often children encounter harmful/inappropriate material online and be unsure how to respond.

Risks include:

- content: exposure to illegal/inappropriate/harmful content (e.g. pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation/disinformation and conspiracy theories)
- contact: harmful interactions with others (e.g. peer pressure, commercial advertising, adults posing as children to groom/exploit for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes)
- conduct: behaviour that increases likelihood of harm (e.g. making/sending/receiving explicit images—consensual or non-consensual—and online bullying)
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams (report concerns to the Anti-Phishing Working Group)

The Department has published guidance to support schools to use generative AI safely and to explain how filtering and monitoring requirements apply in education.

We provide information and raise awareness through:

- acceptable use agreements for children, staff, parents/carers and governors
- curriculum activities on staying safe online
- letters, newsletters and our website
- parents' evenings/sessions
- high-profile events/campaigns (e.g. Safer Internet Day)
- signposting relevant websites/publications
- our E-Safety Policy

Cyber Crime: Preventing Young People Getting Involved

Children may get involved in cybercrime for "fun" without realising the consequences; penalties can be severe. Cybercrime is a serious criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act. If we become aware of incidents, we will consider each case individually and pass information to the police if appropriate or required.

Risks Associated with Gaming

Online gaming is common among children (and many adults).

We raise awareness by:

- talking to parents/carers about the games their children play and whether they are appropriate
- supporting parents to use parental controls/child-safety modes
- discussing boundaries and time limits for gaming
- highlighting relevant resources
- making children aware of dangers, including online grooming, and how to stay safe
- showing children how to report concerns

Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children. This may include (but is not limited to):

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children ("teenage relationship abuse")
- sexual violence (rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault)
- sexual harassment (comments, remarks, jokes, online harassment), whether stand-alone or part of a broader pattern
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (e.g. forcing someone to strip, touch themselves, or engage with a third party)
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery)

- “upskirting” (taking a picture under a person’s clothing without permission, to view genitals/buttocks, for sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm)—a criminal offence
- initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals

Allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated and managed using our normal child protection procedures and in line with Part 5 of KCSIE 2025. We have clear processes to support victims, perpetrators and other affected children. Even with no reported cases, we recognise such abuse may still occur and be unreported. While girls are more likely to be victims and boys perpetrators, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

We have referred to the Respectful School Communities toolkit for advice on creating a culture in which sexual harassment of all kinds is treated as unacceptable. (Insert the school’s specific policy/procedures and preventative strategies/support for children both “perpetrator” and “victim” here.)

Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged, the school follows Part 5 of KCSIE 2025. Where sharing nudes or semi-nudes forms part of the abuse, the school follows UKCCIS *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings*.

Physical Abuse

Staff are aware of signs of potential physical 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 where a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child.

Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

At Brierley Primary School, we recognise children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation.

We adhere to the Prevent Duty Guidance (December 2023; most recently updated April 2021) and seek to protect children against messages of violent extremism and prevent them being drawn into terrorism, including those linked to Islamist ideology or Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism (including Cultural Nationalism, White Nationalism, White Supremacism). Prevent also tackles other ideologies and concerns that may pose a terrorist threat. Established terrorist narratives often include themes such as antisemitism, misogyny, anti-establishment, anti-LGBT grievances and religious or ethnic superiority.

There is no single way to identify susceptibility. Background factors and specific influences (family/friends, social media, online content) may contribute. Staff are alert to behavioural changes and use their judgement to identify children who may be at risk, acting proportionately, which may include the DSL (or deputy) making a Prevent referral on the stopadultabuse.org.uk website (regarding an adult and/or a child).

If we suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, including through radicalisation, we will also contact:

Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS): 0300 123 5012
 Option 3 – ChECS; then Option 2 – Immediate safeguarding concerns

We will also complete a Prevent referral on the stopadultabuse.org.uk website.

Channel

Staff are aware that Channel is a partnership approach to support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists. The Channel Duty Guidance (2023) sets out the process.

In Cheshire East, the Channel Co-ordinator is Sandra Murphy – Head of Adult Safeguarding. The CE Channel Panel meets monthly. Attendees sign a Confidentiality Agreement and share case information to assess vulnerabilities, current support and risks, and agree support plans (consent sought from the adult/parent with PR). Where not appropriate for Channel, safe exit or referral elsewhere is considered.

The SCiES team represents education settings and may contact the DSL before/after meetings. Schools may be invited to attend.

Serious Violence

All staff are aware of indicators that may signal risk of, or involvement with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence, changes in friendships or relationships with older individuals/groups, significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions may indicate children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Risk factors include being male, frequent absence or permanent exclusion, experiences of child maltreatment, and involvement in offending (e.g. theft or robbery). Advice is available in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes

This includes underwear shots, sexual poses and explicit text messaging. While sharing nudes can occur in a consensual relationship between two children under 18, the use of explicit images as "revenge" after a relationship breakdown is increasingly common. Sharing nudes can also be used as sexual exploitation and can occur between strangers.

As the average age of first smartphone/camera-enabled tablet is young, awareness raising is needed across all ages. The school uses age-appropriate materials to promote safety and help children manage pressure. Parents are encouraged to seek advice from the school.

Sexual Abuse

Staff are aware that sexual abuse:

- involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence and whether or not the child is aware
- may involve physical contact (assault by penetration—e.g. rape or oral sex—or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing)
- may include non-contact activities (involving children in looking at or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour, grooming)
- can take place online and technology can facilitate offline abuse
- is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women and other children can also commit acts of sexual abuse

Sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education (see Child-on-Child Abuse).

Acronyms

The policy contains acronyms used in safeguarding. These are listed below with descriptions.

Acronym	Long form	Description
CCE	Child criminal exploitation	Abuse where a power imbalance is exploited to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity for something the victim needs/wants, or for the perpetrator's advantage, and/or through violence or threats.
CSC	Children's Social Care	The local authority service responsible for children's social care.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	Sexual abuse where a power imbalance is exploited to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs/wants, or for the perpetrator's advantage/ status, and/or through violence or threats.
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service	Performs statutory criminal record checks for those working or volunteering in schools.
DfE	Department for Education	National government body responsible for children's services and education in England.
DPO	Data Protection Officer	Person responsible for data protection strategy and compliance with UK GDPR/Data Protection Act.
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Senior leader with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.
EHC plan	Education, Health and Care Plan	Funded plan coordinating education, health and care needs and support.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	Procedures involving partial/total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs; illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.
UK GDPR	UK General Data Protection Regulation	Legislation governing the safety and security of personal data.
HBA	Honour-based abuse	Crimes committed to defend the honour of family/community.
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education	Statutory guidance on safeguarding in schools/colleges.

Acronym	Long form	Description
LA	Local authority	Local government agency providing services in a specified area, including education.
LAC (Cared-for children)	Looked-after children	Children placed in local authority care or looked after by children's services for more than 24 hours.
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus	Collective term protected under the Equality Act 2010.
MAT	Multi-academy trust	Trust providing education across multiple schools.
NPCC	National Police Chiefs' Council	National coordination body for UK law enforcement.
PLAC/PC4C	Previously looked-after children / cared for	Children who were previously in local authority care (also known as care leavers).
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	Non-statutory subject covering self, others, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
PHE	Public Health England	Executive agency of DHSC (legacy reference).
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	Compulsory from Year 7; includes sexual health and positive relationships.
SCR	Single central record	Statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks.
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	Statutory role overseeing SEND policy and provision.
SLT	Senior leadership team	Staff with delegated leadership responsibilities.
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency	DfE executive agency regulating the teaching profession.
TRA (teenage relationship abuse)	Teenage relationship abuse	Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children.
VSH	Virtual school head	Leads on promoting educational achievement of children looked-after/with a social worker.

Safer Recruitment Requirements

Brierley Primary School will obtain references before employment. We will:

- not accept open references (e.g. "to whom it may concern")
- not rely on applicants to obtain their references
- ensure references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and completed by a senior person with appropriate authority
- not accept references from family members
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (or from the current employer/training provider/education setting if never worked with children)
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- contact referees to clarify vague or insufficient information
- compare information on the application form with that in references and address discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for leaving the current/most recent post and resolve any concerns satisfactorily before confirming appointment

Example Recruitment and Selection Checklist

	Actioned by	Date
Advertise vacancy – includes reference to safeguarding responsibilities and information on the level of DBS required		
Applications – scrutinise application forms, looking for gaps in employment/discrepancies etc		
Short list		

References – either prior to interview (if candidate agrees) or at least prior to employment. Check references against information received on application form		
Self-declaration/disclosure sent to shortlisted candidates		
Interview – discuss any relevant information relating to self-disclosure		
Checks –qualification checks verified on day of interview		
Conditional offer of employment made – subject to relevant checks (e.g. references, DBS)		
References received and checked – if not prior to interview		
References verified – to ensure from legitimate source		
Identity – Birth certificate seen where possible, in order to identify whether a person has changed their name – if so, seek evidence of name change (e.g. marriage certificate)		
Right to work in the UK – evidence seen and checked		
Ofsted Suitability checks – where appropriate (e.g. registered manager, proprietor, trustee, childminder, childminder’s assistant)		
DBS certificate – satisfactory DBS received		
DBS barred list – those in regulated activity only		
Health – check candidate is medically fit for the role		
Safeguarding training – and other induction requirements		

DfE REFERENCES

This Child Protection Policy is written in accordance with and guided by the following Department for Education (DfE)

statutory guidance and legislation:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners (DfE, 2023)
 - Education Act 2002, Section 175
 - Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Brierley Primary School recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that all safeguarding and child protection practices are applied fairly, consistently, and without discrimination. The school promotes equality of opportunity and inclusion for all pupils, staff, and families. We are committed to fostering an environment where every individual is respected and supported, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.

DATA PROTECTION

All information related to safeguarding and child protection is handled in line with the school's Data Protection Policy, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the Data Protection Act 2018. Records are stored securely and shared only when it is lawful, necessary, and proportionate to protect a child or comply with statutory requirements. Staff receive training on data protection and confidentiality as part of their safeguarding responsibilities.

GOVERNOR REVIEW AND MONITORING

The Governing Board holds overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively. The Designated Safeguarding Lead provides regular reports to governors regarding safeguarding issues, training, and case trends. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to statutory guidance, and approved by the FULL GOVERNING BOARD.

Chair of Governors	Ratified	Review
Mike Birchall 	Spring 2026	Autumn 2026