Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

In the Beam Trust the named personnel with designated responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding and with designated responsibility regarding allegations against staff/those working in the school are:

Trust Safeguarding Lead for reporting concerns relating to the Headteacher / Headteacher's management of safeguarding within school	CEO	CEO@thebeamtrust.co.uk
Deputy Trust Senior Leader for reporting concerns relating to the Headteacher in the CEO's absence	JR	statham.head@thebeamtrust.co.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Warrington	LADO@warrington.gov.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	CS	cswann@thebeamtrust.co.uk

Each school has their own lead with designated responsibility for:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding (DSL)
- Allegations against staff/those working in the school
- Children in care
- Mental Health Lead

2. INTRODUCTION

At the Beam Trust 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 Local Governing Board for each school approve the S175 return and annual safeguarding audit on a yearly basis. Schools share these with Governors and the Trust for oversight by Governors and Trustees.

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

- Warrington Safeguarding Partnership procedures
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused. 2015
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK (www.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
- The Governance Handbook 2020
- Trust Mental Health Policy
- Trust Relationships (and Sex) Education Policy
- Trust Code of Conduct
- Trust e-safety policy
- "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" DfE July 2017
- School and Colleges: When to call the police
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015,
- Statutory guidance on FGM,
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974,
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

This policy also complies with the Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

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 practitioners 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.

No single practitioner 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 children and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and consult with Children's Services in Warrington (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 our schools; we maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned.

In our Trust 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
- Children 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
- All staff 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 Trust and schools' websites and printed copies of this document are available to parents upon request.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction, alongside our Trust Code of Conduct. The Safeguarding induction will include the Trust's child protection policy, behaviour policy, staff Code of Conduct (including low-level concerns, allegations and whistleblowing), the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, online safety including filtering and monitoring responsibilities, and the identity and role of the DSL and deputies. Every member of staff, including those who do not work directly with children, will be provided with and required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full. The Trust will maintain arrangements to help staff understand and discharge the responsibilities set out in Part One.

3. AIMS OF THIS DOCUMENT

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the well being of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice across the Trust
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children
- To raise the 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 Care and the Police
- To ensure that all members of the Trust community are aware of our procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children
- To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support children who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. Child in Need/ Child Protection Plan
- The Trust adopts a proportionate approach to safeguarding, ensuring concerns are addressed appropriately in line with the level of risk and context.

Duties

To provide a safe environment, the Trust, Local Governing Bodies, Head Teachers and the Senior Leadership Team of each school will:

- Ensure that everyone from the Designated Safeguarding Governor to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and all members of the school community, have appropriate safeguards and supports in place should they choose to raise safeguarding issues, however unusual or sensitive these may be;
- Cultivate an ethos within the school community where all adults feel comfortable and supported to bring 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;
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk without coercion and are listened to;
- Ensure children know that if they are worried, they can talk to any adults in the school;
- Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies and are fully committed to the provision of Early Help;
- Ensure all adults working with children are aware of the role of their Local Authority Safeguarding Partnership;
- Include opportunities in the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) & Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to assess and manage risk (including online safety) as is appropriate to their age, stage of development and level of understanding;
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised;
- Take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with families and agencies as far as possible;
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school;
- Promote child health and safety;

- Promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice in line with procedure;
- Ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against staff, temporary staff and volunteers:
- Put in place and promote robust anti-bullying, including cyber bullying, homophobic, transphobic and hate crime strategies;
- Meet the health needs of children with medical conditions;
- Provide first aid;
- Maximise school security;
- Tackle drugs and substance misuse;
- Provide support and planning for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community;
- Work with all agencies with regard to missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity, child sexual and criminal exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, contextual safeguarding and violence/knife crime in the community.
- Tackle child on child abuse and sexual violence and sexual harassment through RSE/PSHE sessions, ensuring all children are aware of the school's zero tolerance position and how this will be managed through the school's behaviour policy. Additionally, 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.
- Ensure all staff are aware of contextual safeguarding (extra-familial harm) and the risks of abuse posed to children outside of the family context.

4. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all members of our school communities (including Trustees, Governors, staff, children, volunteers, supply teachers, parents/carers, visitors, agency staff and anyone working on behalf of the Trust / schools).

This policy is consistent with Warrington Safeguarding Partnership's (WSP) child protection procedures.

5. 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:

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

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

Family Help: coordinated support for children and families. This includes universal services and community-based early help, and the targeted early help level of Family Help. Referrals and assessments will follow Warrington's published threshold document, local protocol and Continuum of Need

Abuse and Neglect: a form of maltreatment or exploitation 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 abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects' in relation to 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 Trust/ school/ education setting in either a paid or voluntary capacity, full time or part time. This also includes parent volunteers and governors and trustees.

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

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

6. 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 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 are given to equipping the children with the skills needed to stay safe; including providing opportunities for Personal, Social and Health Education throughout the curriculum
- Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place. Their effectiveness is reviewed at least once in every academic year by the senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the DSL and IT support. The review will check that filtering works appropriately on all internet-connected devices and in all relevant

locations, and a written record of the checks and any actions will be retained. Staff training will explain what is blocked, how activity is monitored and how concerns are reported. The Trust will avoid unreasonable over-blocking.

- All adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Headteacher and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and can 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 Warrington Safeguarding Partnership 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 children in custody and their resettlement back into their school community is undertaken, where necessary, as part of our inclusive approach
- We comply with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2023 and support the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership's procedures, which support professionals to access the **right help and support** for children and their families at the **right time**
- Each school systematically monitors child welfare, keeps accurate records, speaks to parents and notifies appropriate agencies when necessary
- All relevant 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 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.
- We encourage our schools to consult with, listen and respond to children;
- We use research evidence to inform our prevention work.

7. UNIVERSAL SERVICES, COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY HELP AND FAMILY HELP

All staff understand the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership's 'Continuum of Need' and Child Protection procedures; 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 Trust, staff are aware that they must be prepared to identify those children who may benefit from early help. The staff are alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions 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 or county lines
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- 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 drugs or alcohol 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

- Deliberately missing education, including persistent absences for part of the school day. We recognise the distinction between children missing education and children absent from education. For example, children missing education can be a sign of child exploitation
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves;
- Has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviour;
- Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, is on a part-time timetable or has experienced multiple suspensions;
- May be at risk of financial exploitation;
- May be affected by child-to-parent or caregiver abuse.

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

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 Warrington's Education Safeguarding Team /contact the police. Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by Warrington's Safeguarding Partnership.

In the first instance staff should discuss 'Early Help' requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If early help is appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead will support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up a family help or community-based early help assessment, as appropriate under Warrington's published thresholds and procedures as appropriate.

As staff may be required to support other agencies and practitioners and parents/carers and children in an early help assessment; all staff are aware of the relevant assessments and appropriate support is given to them when they undertake an early help assessment.

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 schools are made aware that there are adults whom they can approach if worried or in difficulty.

There is adequate signposting to external sources of support and advice for staff, parents and children.

Where a school commissions or places a pupil in alternative provision, the school remains responsible for the pupil's safeguarding. Before placement and throughout it, the school will be satisfied that the provision is suitable and safe, complete appropriate checks, share relevant safeguarding information securely, agree attendance and absence reporting, maintain regular contact, review the pupil's welfare and progress, and respond promptly to any concern.

Elective home education (EHE)

- Elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education
- Many home educated children have a positive learning experience

8. EARLY HELP, CHILD IN NEED AND CHILD PROTECTION

In our Trust we ensure that we follow Warrington's Multi-agency 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 Headteachers and their DSL are aware

of the Pan Cheshire Procedure for Multi-agency Professional Challenge and Escalation Warrington Safeguarding Partnership Procedures

9. CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD-RECORDING AND REPORTING:

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. Staff must log their concern on the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS), which all staff have a log on for and access to. The only exceptions to this are, at times, Midday Assistants (school specific) who will fill in a Concern Form (available from the school office or staff room in every school) along with visitors to the school who have concerns and supply staff. The form will capture all the relevant information about the concerns. This is evidence based practice and will support the DSL in making an assessment of what action needs to be taken.

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 the 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
- At no time promise confidentiality to a child or adult

Staff are aware that they should not question the child. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will obtain key 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 and 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.

A consultation will take place with Warrington MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and/or the police immediately. Where a child lives in a different authority the Designated Safeguarding 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. Staff must not assume that a colleague or another professional will take action or share information that may be critical to keeping a child safe. Information will be shared promptly, proportionately and on a need-to-know basis. Data protection law does not prevent information sharing for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. Where a member of staff makes contact, they ensure that they make the Designated Safeguarding Lead aware as soon as possible.

Each school maintains its own Safeguarding Records electronically. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All records provide a factual, accurate, evidence-based account. Records are written by a member of staff, dated and where appropriate, witnessed. Records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, how it was followed up and resolved, the action taken, decisions reached, outcomes and the rationale for each decision.

Each school ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of "the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (together, 'data protection laws') 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. (Schools no longer have the obligation to preserve records for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA))
- Handled according to people's data protection rights
- Kept safe and secure
- The DSL should keep written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions, including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program
- Each school ensures that information is transferred safely and securely when a child with a Safeguarding Record transfers to another school. We also ensure that Key workers or social workers are notified where a child leaves the school (as appropriate). Staff, governors and trustees should use the DfE's data protection guidance for schools to help you:
- Comply with data protection law
- Develop data policies and processes
- Know what staff and pupil data to keep
- Follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

10. SAFER WORKING PRACTICES

Use of mobile phones, cameras and internet:

Staff throughout our Trust take safeguarding seriously and understand this policy is over- arching. We refer staff to the '*Code of conduct'* and '*Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in Education Settings May 2022'*.

Personal mobiles and electronic devices:

Each school will maintain and communicate a clear mobile phone and personal-device approach for pupils, staff, visitors and volunteers, consistent with the Trust's Code of Conduct, behaviour arrangements and online-safety procedures.

Personal mobile phones and recording devices (tablets, cameras, laptops etc) are never used by staff at the school/setting.

If staff have personal phones or devices these are stored securely and will be switched off or on silent during directed hours.

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

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

School devices:

School devices remain the property of the school/ Trust and in using them staff will follow the Code of Conduct.

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

Cameras photography and images:

Each school will obtain parents' and carers' consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).

Staff will ensure their school's designated camera or recording devices (tablets, cameras, laptops etc) are used when capturing evidence of work undertaken.

Internet safety:

On our schools' equipment we ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.

The breadth of online risk is considered through the categories of content, contact, conduct and commerce. This includes harmful interaction with generative AI applications, explicit images generated or altered using AI, misinformation and disinformation, financial exploitation and scams. Any use of generative AI by staff or pupils will follow the Trust's approved systems, data-protection requirements and relevant DfE guidance.

Working off school premises:

Where staff take school/ Trust computer/digital equipment / or records in paper form, off school site, they do so with the view that they abide by the Trust's Data Protection Policy.

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

11. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Support and advice are sought from the Trust's HR advisers and/or Warrington's Education Safeguarding team in the first instance and Children's Services or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) whenever necessary.

In the Beam Trust we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school; including directly employed staff, volunteers, supply teachers, trainee teachers and contractors may have;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- 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 concern or allegation that may meet the harm threshold must be referred without delay to the Headteacher, who will consider whether an onward referral to the LADO is required. A concern about the Headteacher must be referred to the Chair of Governors/Trust's designated route. Where there is a conflict of interest in reporting to the Headteacher, the concern must be reported directly to the LADO and the Trust's senior safeguarding lead.

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

Where concerns relate to supply staff, trainee teachers or contracted staff, the school and the relevant agency, provider or employer share safeguarding responsibilities. The school will take the lead in establishing the facts and managing the safeguarding response, consult the LADO where appropriate, and work closely with the third party, which will normally lead any employment or disciplinary process. Concerns about trainee teachers will also be shared with the relevant initial teacher training provider.

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 whistle blowing channels may be open to them. They have been made aware of those other channels of support via the Trust's Whistle blowing Policy.

We will refer to the guidance that has been added within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 on managing allegations against organisations or individuals hiring out the school premises. Any allegations when hiring out the school premises will be subject to the same safeguarding procedures as are in place within school.

12. 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 Trust's 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
- Humiliating children

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 DSL/ 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 DSL/ 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.

13. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy and Single Central Record procedures will reflect the KCSIE 2026 definition of regulated activity, including the removal of the former supervision exemption for relevant volunteer activity, and the required level of DBS/barred-list checking. Recruiting managers must use the current KCSIE 2026 requirements rather than historic supervision-exemption guidance.

The Trust pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2026 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 our organisation who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. We do this by:

- Operating safe recruitment practices; including highlighting the importance we place on safeguarding children in our recruitment adverts and interview questions, appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining practitioner references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. Our schools will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches will be carried out.

- It also includes undertaking interviews and checking the Children's List and right to work in England checks in accordance with DBS and Department for Education procedures
- 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 children and parents, following the Trust's 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)
- Maintaining an accurate, complete, up to date Single Central Record

14. STAFF TRAINING AND UPDATES

There is a commitment to the continuous development of all staff, regardless of role, with regard to safeguarding training:

All staff undertake annual 'endorsed' Basic Awareness in Safeguarding and Child Protection training. This is organised directly by schools to enable staff to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety (e.g. 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 have completed specific training such as Designated Safeguarding Lead Training to carry out the duties of the role and attend multi agency Safeguarding and Child Protection training on an annual basis.

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

15. CHILDREN IN CARE (LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN) AND CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY IN CARE

We ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep children in care safe as we are aware that children often become cared for as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Each school has identified a designated teacher for our children in care; this person works closely with the Local Authority Virtual school.

The designated teacher and DSL will work with the Virtual School Head as appropriate, including to support attendance as well as educational achievement and safeguarding. The Trust will consider the needs of children in kinship care and children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements orders.

16. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

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 disproportionally 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.

• Difficulties in reporting concerns because of communication needs or reliance on adults;

• A higher risk of peer-group isolation, disproportionate bullying and restrictive interventions;

• Assumptions that behaviour, distress or injury arise from SEND rather than possible abuse;

• Challenges in accessing trusted adults, relationships and sex education, or appropriate online-safety support.

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

17. THE USE OF 'REASONABLE FORCE'/POSITIVE HANDLING

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools 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 positively handled to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. Each school has its own policy or procedure for the use of reasonable force and/or positive handling which is followed by staff.

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 positive handling of a child is always reported to an identified senior manager.

Any restrictive intervention will be used only where lawful, necessary, reasonable and proportionate, in line with the Trust or school's separate reasonable-force/positive-handling policy and current national guidance. The child's individual needs, including SEND, disability, trauma and communication needs, will be considered. Incidents will be recorded, reviewed and communicated to parents or carers unless doing so would place the child at further risk.

18. PRIVATE FOSTERING

We recognise that our schools have 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 aid our awareness each school establishes parental responsibility for every child in their school; 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 step-parents; 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 Warrington. The school would also inform Warrington of the private fostering arrangements.

19. CHILDREN MISSING OUT ON EDUCATION AND MISSING 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.

Local Authority procedures for dealing with children that go missing from lessons and/or school are followed. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, 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 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 one of our schools, we ensure we carry out all necessary checks and refer them as Children Missing Education (CME), using the appropriate notification form on the Local Authority 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.

20. 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).

21. CHILDREN REQUIRING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The Trust recognises that mental health difficulties may develop into safeguarding concerns and may include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They may also indicate that a child has suffered or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff do not diagnose mental-health conditions but are well placed to notice changes in behaviour, sleep, social withdrawal, loss of interest, physical signs of self-harm or neglect of self-care. Where a mental-health concern is also a safeguarding concern, staff will follow this policy and speak to the DSL or deputy. Where a child is in immediate danger, staff will call 999 or arrange urgent attendance at A&E with a suitable adult. Urgent non-emergency mental-health support may be sought through NHS 111.

22. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads ensure 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.

23. 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 schools 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 intra-familial 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.
As listening schools, staff are aware to be vigilant to these issues and would know how to identify and respond to:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Child abduction/community safety issues
- Children and the Court System
- Children with a family member in prison
- Homelessness
- Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (both child and parent)
- Child sexual exploitation / trafficked children
- Criminal Exploitation including county lines and serious violence
- Extremism and Radicalisation
- Children missing education
- Domestic 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 homophobic, racist, gender and disability. 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 making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated or altered images, put children in danger.

Safeguarding children with medical conditions

Children with medical conditions may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying or exclusion and may depend on adults for intimate or personal care. Staff will remain professionally curious, follow individual healthcare plans, recognise changes that may indicate a safeguarding concern and report concerns to the DSL. Medical needs will never be used to explain away possible indicators of harm.

Young carers

Young carers may have increased absence, fatigue, anxiety, isolation or barriers to learning and may be less able to seek help. Staff will identify and respond to their specific safeguarding and support needs, including through appropriate universal, community-based early help or Family Help pathways.

An overview of specific safeguarding issues and our response are provided within appendix 5.

24. RAISING AWARENESS ON SCHOOL TRANSFER

To ensure children's needs continue to be met on change of setting, our schools will:

- Ensure that when children leave the school, their Safeguarding/Child Protection File is discussed as soon as possible with the Designated Safeguarding Person at the new school.
- Make sure that the Safeguarding/Child Protection File is transferred separately from the main child file within 5 days of transfer. It should be sent electronically via CPOMs.
- The DSL will ensure secure transfer and obtain confirmation of receipt. The receiving DSL and, where relevant, the SENCO will be made aware. The DSL will consider sharing information in advance where it is needed to assess risk or have support in place from the child's first day, including where there are concerns about serious violence, harmful behaviour, Channel support or risk to others.
- Where the new school is not known, alert the Education Welfare Service at the Local Authority so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing children and appropriate action taken to ascertain the safety of the child.

25. TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

In line with Part 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, The Board of Trustees fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Government guidance.

As a Trust we ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. KCSiE 2026 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".

Trustees will ensure the Trust meets its Public Sector Equality Duty when developing and implementing safeguarding, behaviour, recruitment and child-on-child abuse arrangements. Trustees will receive regular assurance on filtering and monitoring reviews, DSL cover, alternative provision, staff training, safer recruitment and the effectiveness of the whole-Trust safeguarding culture.

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

- The Trust has an effective safeguarding and child protection policy; Local Governing Boards ensure that procedures within the policy (section B) are localised for their school, including having robust Safeguarding procedures in place
- The safeguarding and child protection policy includes:
- Procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse;
- How allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with;
- Clear processes as to how victims, alleged perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported;
- A clear statement that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up";
- Recognition of the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- The different forms child-on-child abuse can take, such as:
- bullying (including cyber bullying);
- physical abuse
- sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Upskirting
- Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated or altered images
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- The Trust and its schools operate safe recruitment procedures and carry out appropriate checks on new staff and adults working on the school site
- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against any member of staff or adult on site

- There is a member of the Leadership Team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Safeguarding and Child Protection issues
- The Trust takes steps to remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding Safeguarding arrangements
- The Trust are supported by the Local Governing Board nominating a member responsible for liaising with the Trust and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse against the Headteacher; this is the Chair
- Each school carries out an annual Safeguarding Audit (Section 175 audit) in consultation with the Local Governing Board, sharing this with the WSP on request
- Children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- That there is cascading of safeguarding advice and guidance issued by Warrington's Safeguarding Partnership and government guidance and legislation

Finally:

Staff throughout the Beam Trust 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.

26. STATEMENT OF SCHOOL ETHOS

We recognise that for children, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps all children and especially those at risk of, or suffering from, abuse.

We will:

- Continue to maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to e.g. by continuing to ensure that children feel their contribution to

school life is valued and their voice is an integral part of future thinking and developments through the school council.

- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty e.g. through identifying specific staff such as the class teacher, teaching assistant, Leadership Team and by outlining the specific nature of their supportive roles.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare, parenting skills and violence free relationships.
- Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies e.g. by continuing to adopt a free flow of information to parents as the need arises and by continuing our inter-agency commitments.
- Ensure that key staff are trained in Early Help procedures.

Schools do not operate in isolation. The welfare of children is a corporate responsibility of the entire local authority, working in partnership with other public agencies, the voluntary sector and service users and carers. All local authority services have an impact on the lives of children and families, and local authorities have a particular responsibility towards children and families most at risk of social exclusion. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults and especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Warrington's Safeguarding Partnership (WSP).

27. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard children. There are, however, key people within our schools and the LA who have specific responsibilities under Safeguarding procedures.

28. TRAINING

All governors need to attend appropriate training.

All staff need to complete safeguarding training every year.

The safeguarding leads need updating every year and must attend additional multi agency training and DSL network meetings in order to ensure the school works well with partner agencies to safeguard children.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff understand the school's filtering and monitoring systems as part of their safeguarding training. This includes knowing how the systems work, what they are expected to do, and how to escalate concerns identified through monitoring.

We will ensure that staff and other appropriate adults attend training relevant to their role. Staff are kept informed of current Child Protection issues through staff meetings and emails.

The DSL is available to support staff if there are concerns or queries about Child Protection.

29. LISTENING TO AND RESPONDING TO CHILDREN

Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in documents produced by Warrington's Safeguarding Partnership.

- Effective safeguarding systems are child centred, failings in safeguarding systems are too often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults (potentially the child's parents) ahead of the needs of children.

- Children want to be respected, their views to be heard, to have stable relationships with professionals built on trust and for consistent support provided for their individual needs. This should guide the behaviour of professionals.
- Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say; take their views seriously; and work with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs.
- Whilst professionals cannot promise confidentiality, they must do the right thing in all cases. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs; which includes child protection action and the offer of 'early help'.

30. RECORD KEEPING PROCEDURE

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice.

KCSIE (2026) states: All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

All safeguarding records should include:

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

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

A record of concern, suspicion or allegation should be made at the time or as soon as possible after the event. It is not usually advisable to make a written record whilst a child is disclosing abuse, as it may deter the child from speaking. However, it is important that events are recorded in the child's own words and as soon as possible,

to ensure absolute accuracy. Records should be factual, using the child's own words in cases where a disclosure is made. Professional opinion can be given, but needs to be supported by stating the facts and observations upon which the opinions are based. It is important to remember that what is recorded can be shared with all appropriate agencies and potentially the child's parents. (Except where doing so, would place a child at risk of significant harm in the case of parents (See DES circular 17/89)).

All records should be dated and signed with the name of the signatory clearly printed and filed in chronological order. All recorded child protection concerns must be passed to the DSL. Following completion of a log on CPOMS the DSL will need to make a professional judgement about what action needs to be taken.

All records of child protection concerns, disclosures or allegations are to be treated as sensitive information and should be kept together securely and separately from the child's general school records. Schools should comply with their own 'Retention of records policy' which has been updated to comply with GDPR (May 2018).

When a child changes school, a copy of the child protection file should be sent to the new school, directed to the receiving school's DSL. Primary schools must ensure that they gain a receipt to evidence this transfer of confidential and sensitive information Schools no longer have the obligation to preserve records for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)

31. CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff are trained to never promise confidentiality to a child. If the child decides not to share the confidence with the teacher the latter should still pass on any concerns he/she might have had, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as a result of the initial conversation e.g. a child with obvious, visible bruising. If the child does share information of a Child Protection nature the child should be informed that the teacher would have to pass the information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, having read the information, will discuss the contents with the child in question and will then either seek advice from Social Services, make a referral to Social Services under Child Protection procedures and/or seek clarification from parents as appropriate.

32. REFERRAL – PROCEDURES

Procedures to follow if a member of staff is concerned about the welfare or safety of a child;

Child Protection Process

Disclosure of abuse from a child or reported about a child.

Child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Don't interrogate but can ask open questions (Who? What? When? Why? How?) for clarification
Don't agree to secrecy
Refer to DSL
Record what was actually said and what happened. Don't interpret

Allegation against family member of close family friend	Allegation against member of staff or volunteer	Allegation against Head Teacher
DSL contacts the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)	DSL contacts Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) May be called to a Strategy Meeting	DSL or Dep DSL (if Head is the DSL) contacts Chair of Governors Chair of Governors contacts LADO. May be called to a Strategy Meeting

Advice given including whether family should be contacted

Decision within 1 working day as to whether accepted as a referral

Strategy discussion with police and any other appropriate agencies

Medical examination if appropriate

Assessment by Social Worker

If child removed under Emergency Protection Order or Police Protection Order, Care Proceedings may be initiated and school may be called to give evidence

Child Protection Case Conference within 15 days of strategy discussion.

School invited to submit report and attend conference

Child Protection Plan not needed. Support offered.

Child made subject of a Child Protection Plan
School may be member of Core Group to implement the plan
School attends Review Case Conferences
If poor progress may go to Care Proceedings and school may be called to give evidence

33. CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Children can abuse other children. This is also referred to as peer on peer abuse. Child on child abuse can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and all incidents should be recorded appropriately on CPOMS and staff should speak to their DSL if they have any concerns.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator. It is preventable, and early, evidence-based support may reduce the risk of children going on to commit abuse or violence. The Trust will consider risks of serious physical assault, threats involving weapons, abuse in intimate relationships, misogynistic or misandrist behaviour, and abuse occurring online, off-site or around the school day.

34. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AT RISK

Our schools will endeavour to support children through:

- A relevant curriculum which encourages self-esteem and self-motivation;
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment e.g. our 'Anti-bullying Policy' and which gives all children and adults a sense of being respected and valued e.g. buddy schemes for new children and mentors for newly qualified staff;
- The implementation of positive behaviour management strategies
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the children and their families;
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group trained to respond appropriately in Child Protection situations.

35. BULLYING

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

This policy must be read in conjunction with other child Trust policies e.g. Anti-bullying policy; Behaviour policy; Positive Handling policy.

36. CURRICULUM-HOW SAFEGUARDING INCLUDING ONLINE SAFETY IS TAUGHT

As part of developing a healthy lifestyle children are taught: -

- To recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave appropriately
- To judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable
- To recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and develop effective ways of resisting pressure, including knowing where and when to get help.

Children should feel valued, respected and able to discuss any concerns they have.

37. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The school will follow the Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy, Single Central Record procedures and Sections 11–13 of this policy. School leaders will ensure that required checks are completed and recorded and that any allegation or concern about an adult is managed through the Trust-wide reporting and LADO arrangements.

38. ROUTINE SAFEGUARDING FOR STAFF

In order to ensure the daily safety of all staff and children, the following must be observed at all times:

- ALL staff should wear their identity badges visibly.
- ALL visitors to the school site should report to reception and should be formally signed in. They will also be issued with a badge which should be worn visibly at all times.
- Staff should be vigilant to visitors on site who are not wearing identity laminates and should challenge them directly. If necessary, visitors should be escorted to reception in order to formally sign in.

- Staff should make children aware of their need to report to staff visitors on site who are not wearing identity laminates.

39. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Children who may be suffering from mental health issues are identified through other children, parents or staff.

We are able to access a range of advice to help identify children in need of extra mental health support and this includes working with external agencies e.g. CAMHS. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in schools guidance.

The Trust's approach is to work with child and parents to engage a child and focus on specific concern. This intervention can be via phone/ email or in person. Often, small tweaks to issues can be a major factor in improving emotional well-being. For example: sitting elsewhere in a class room; informing staff that a child is struggling with homework; being considerate of recent bereavement.
Staff and parents continue discussions with regard to progress. Where concerns are more significant and immediate, referrals are made to CAMHS. Parents usually do this via their GP, but the referral can be made through either the School Nurse or the school directly if required.

40. APPROACHES TO BUILDING CHILDREN'S RESILIENCE TO RADICALISATION

The Beam Trust believes that we can build children' resilience to radicalisation of all types by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping them to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making.

- We promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and, within this, fundamental British values.

- Our assemblies encourage children to reflect on current topics and develop a thoughtful insightful response to world events and issues.
- We actively encourage external visitors and speakers to discuss with children their faith, culture and traditions and how it helps them to make positive choices in their everyday lives.

41. PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

Examples of the understanding and knowledge children learn at our schools include:

- An understanding of how citizens can influence decision-making through the democratic process
- An understanding that the freedom to hold other faiths and beliefs is protected in law
- An acceptance that people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having none) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour
- An understanding of the importance of identifying and combating discrimination

42. BRITISH VALUES POLICY – PROMOTING THE VALUES OVERVIEW

Through its curriculum, extra-curricular activities, teaching and learning our schools will promote British values. By doing so, we will ensure that all learners understand the values that have traditionally underpinned British society. The teaching of these values will promote cohesiveness within our schools and communities. We will prepare children for life in England where the population has an increasingly rich diversity of backgrounds, origins, beliefs and cultures by promoting the values on which our society has been built. By teaching children these values we will help all to become good citizens of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that all develop an understanding of the values which underpin life in Britain.
2. To teach children to have a mutual respect and tolerance for, and an understanding of the various faiths and beliefs represented in Britain today.
3. To ensure that all learn to uphold the rule of law and support freedom, justice and equality.
4. To help all understand and value the rich diversity that other citizens from different cultures, religions and backgrounds bring to our national society.
5. To value people's differences and respect them.
6. To develop children' awareness and tolerance of communities different to their own.
7. To value democracy and to stand up for right against wrong.
8. To care for the sick, the poor, the weak and the old and treat them as valued members of our society.
9. To ensure that learners become loyal and patriotic citizens of the United Kingdom.

STRATEGIES

1. Our schools will promote British values through its teaching, learning across the subjects of the curriculum to help all understand how the values have underpinned life in Britain throughout its history, geography, language, literature, sport and games, personal and social education and religions.
2. Our schools will teach children about the growth and development of our parliamentary democracy and its key institutions including the constitutional monarchy.
3. Learners will be taught about democracy and universal suffrage and the duty of citizens to participate in and contribute to life in Britain.
4. We will develop the skills of participation and responsible action necessary for living together in harmony as citizens of United Kingdom.
5. Children will learn about the democratic structures of our national government and we will promote civic pride by helping them learn and understand about local government.
6. Across the curriculum we will teach the importance of duty, loyalty and patriotism.

OUTCOMES

Through our work and partnerships children will gain a good understanding of the values that underpin the privileges, rights, responsibilities and duties of citizenship. We will equip young people with the knowledge, skills and understanding to make a positive contribution to the harmony of our local and national community. We will develop responsible young people who support and positively value community cohesion. This policy will make a key contribution to each school's positive ethos. Headteachers and the Trust Board will assess the impact of this policy and monitor its operation. It should be viewed in conjunction with the Trust's other policies especially the Equality Policy and Behaviour Policy.

Appendix 1 – Key Contacts, Roles & Responsibilities

Staying Safe

OUR LOCAL CONTACT NUMBERS ARE:

Warrington MASH: 01925 443322

Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours): 01925 444400

Warrington Safeguarding Partnerships: 01925 443126

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): LADO@warrington.gov.uk

Prevent referrals: Prevent Referral Process

Children Missing in Education: 01925 442261

Police: 999 (Emergency) / 101 (Non-emergency)

Mental Health Helpline: 0800 051 1508

Adult Safeguarding: 01925 443126

Roles and Responsibilities of the Headteacher/Trust Board

- Discuss and review safeguarding matters arising at Full Trust Board and Committee Meetings
- Ensure there is a DSL and Deputy DSL and that these people have received the appropriate training
- Ensure there is a named Safeguarding Governor in each school and that they undertake training at a minimum of two yearly intervals, although annual training is best practice
- Ensure the DSL/Deputy DSL attends appropriate refresher training every two years as a minimum, although annual update is best practice

- Provide supervision to the DSL (as required)
- Ensure the school remedies any deficiencies or weaknesses brought to its attention without delay
- Ensure this Policy is reviewed on an annual basis
- Be aware of and make sure the school follows Warrington's safeguarding arrangements
- Ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, working in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)

Role and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Governor

- Maintain their own knowledge and skills in safeguarding children
- Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are in place
- Meet with the DSL every term, following the monitoring schedule
- A contact for any concerns staff may have related to the Headteacher.

The Roles and Responsibilities of the DSL

- Lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding and child protection concerns at the school
- Review this and all other safeguarding policies and ensure staff have signed to say they have read and understood them
- Ensure all safeguarding policies are available to parents/carers on the school website or from the school office
- Share Safeguarding updates with staff
- Ensure robust, reliable and known DSL cover arrangements whenever the DSL is unavailable because of illness, leave, training, off-site duties or other circumstances, including out-of-hours or out-of-term activities. Arrangements may include a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system that is monitored and acted upon without delay.
- Ensure the DSL and deputies understand information sharing within the Trust, on in-year and phase transfer, and with safeguarding partners and other agencies; and maintain detailed, accurate and secure records of concerns, discussions, decisions and rationales.

- Manage the transfer of child protection files when a child moves to a new school
- Attend DSL training
- Access regular training and termly network events to keep as up to date as possible with changes in legislation and or statutory guidance
- Keep up to date with new safeguarding documents nationally and within the local authority
- Ensure whole school staff safeguarding training on at least a yearly basis, including briefings on relevant topics
- Ensure induction training to all new staff to at least include the Child Protection Policy (incorporating the role of the DSL), CME procedures, Positive Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct
- Follow Warrington's safeguarding arrangements (Safeguarding Partners) and share with staff
- Contribute to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, working in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)
- Supply information as requested by the three Safeguarding Partners
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within school
- Assume the role of Designated Lead for Looked After and previously Looked After children
- Make appropriate judgements on what action to take based on information presented by staff and contact children's social care/MASH if suspect cases of abuse (contact number 01925 443400)
- Support staff that make referrals to children's social care/MASH and the Channel Programme
- Refer cases to the Channel Programme, where there is a radicalisation concern
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk/harm to a child, to the Disclosure Barring Service
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police
- Assess the appropriateness of completing an early help assessment (EHA), or whether the threshold has been met for statutory social work services
- Ensure all children's files are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file and in locked locations

- Alongside the Attendance Champion / Manager, monitor pupil's absence from school, particularly if they are on the Vulnerable Risk Register (VRR) and follow the procedures set out in the Attendance/CME Policy
- Keep an up to date Vulnerable Risk Register
- Provide supervision to the Deputy DSL
- Complete a safeguarding audit on an annual basis at the request of the Local Authority
- Meet with the Safeguarding Governor every term and provide minutes / notes of meeting to the LGB
- Meet with the Safeguarding Team
- (If not the Headteacher) Liaise with the Headteacher to inform her of issues (especially ongoing enquires under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations)

The Role and Responsibilities of the Deputy DSL

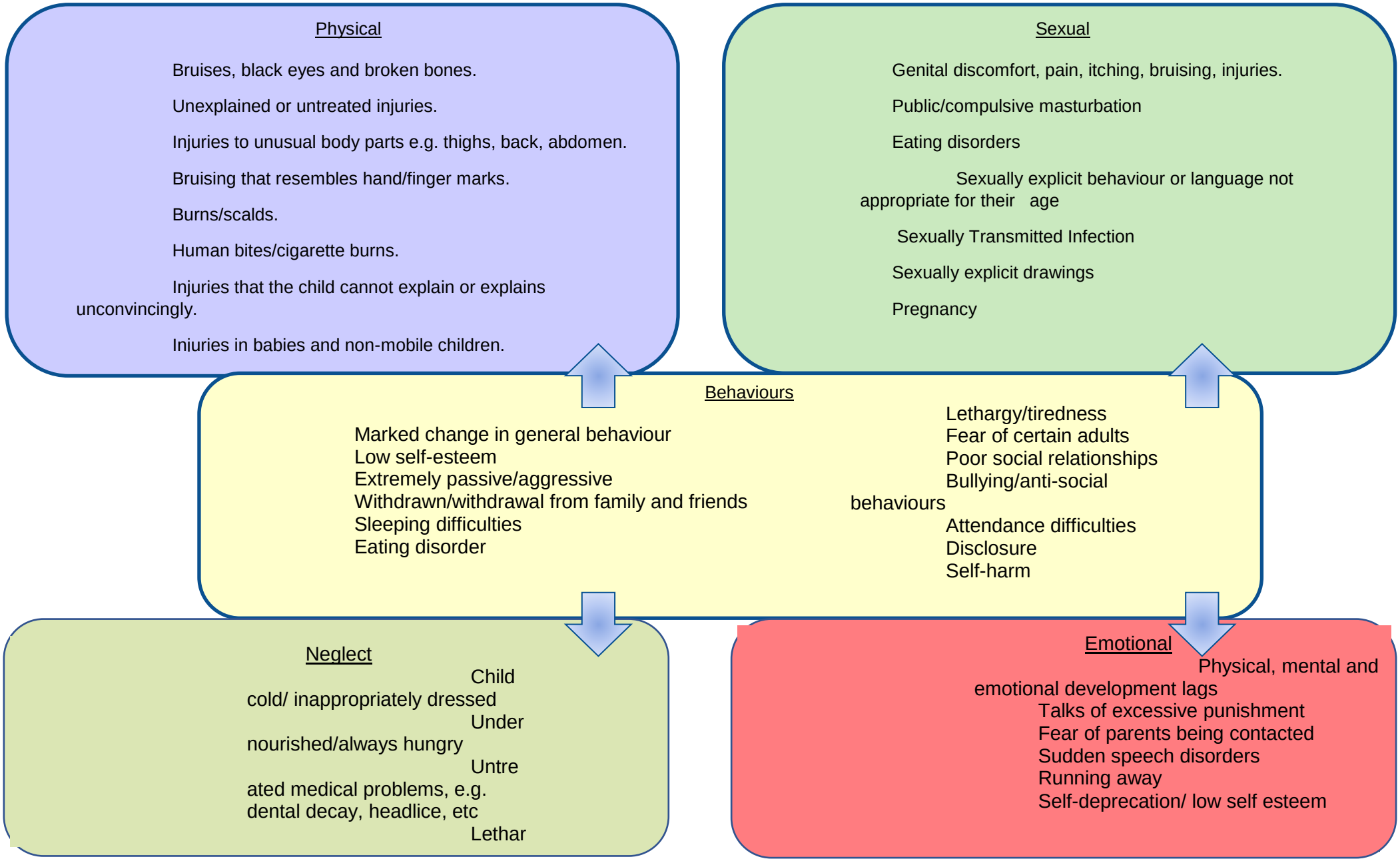
- Assume the lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding and child protection concerns at the school in the absence of the DSL
- Attend DSL training
- Access training to keep as up to date as possible with changes in legislation and or statutory guidance, including annual DSL training from the LA
- Keep up to date with new safeguarding documents nationally and within the local authority
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within school, alongside the DSL
- Attend Safeguarding Team Meetings
- Support the DSL in her role, as required.

APPENDIX 2: Graduated Response

If at any point you are concerned about the safety of a child or young person, contact Warrington MASH

- **Tel: 01925 443322**
- **Tel: (Emergency Duty Team for out of hours) 01925 444400**

Appendix 3 – Symptoms of Abuse



Appendix 4 – Receiving Disclosures

Receive

- Listen, try not to look shocked or be judgemental
- Believe what they say, accept what they say and take it seriously
- Don't make them feel bad by saying "you should have told me earlier"
- Don't 'interrogate' them – let them tell you, try not to interrupt
- Note the date and time, what was done, who did it, and where it took place
- Don't criticise the perpetrator
- Don't ask leading questions – use 'open' questions to clarify only (T.E.D)

Tell me what you mean by that?
Explain that to me
Describe that….

Reassure

- Stay calm, tell the child they've done the right thing in telling you
- Reassure them they are not to blame
- Empathise – don't tell them how they should be feeling
- Don't promise confidentiality, explain who needs to know
- Explain what you'll do next
- Be honest about what you can do

Report and Record

- Make a brief, accurate, timely and factual record
- Discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy, without delay
- The DSL will assess the situation and decide on the next steps

Things to include:

- Time and full date of disclosure/incident and the time and full date the record was made
- An accurate record of what was said or seen, using the child's words as appropriate
- Whether it is 1st or 2nd hand information
- Whether the child was seen/spoken to
- Whether information is fact/ professional judgement
- Full names and roles/status of anyone identified in the report
- Sign the record with a legible signature (if written log)
- Record actions agreed with/by the Designated Lead
- Avoid acronyms/jargon/abbreviations

Review records regularly; add any new concerns respond to these immediately.

DO NOT PHOTOGRAPH INJURIES OR MARKS EVEN IF REQUESTED TO DO SO

Appendix 5 - Forms of Abuse

Extra-Familial Harm (also known as Contextual Safeguarding) including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Serious Youth Violence

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. **All** staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This means that assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that schools provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse. CSE and CCE **may involve** an exchange for something the victim wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children Missing from Home or Care

Children who run away from home or from care can provide a clear behavioural indication that they are either unhappy or do not feel safe in the place that they are living. Research shows that children run away from conflict or problems at home or school, neglect or abuse, or because they are being groomed by predatory individuals who seek to exploit them. Many run away on numerous occasions.

Our schools are aware of the Pan-Cheshire Joint Protocol on Children and Young People Who run Away or Go Missing from Home or Care 2020-2022.

The association of chief police officers has provided the following definition; a missing person *is:* 'Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed'.

Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors need to be considered.

Push factors include:

- Conflict with parents/carers
- Feeling powerless
- Being bullied/abused
- Being unhappy/not being listened to
- The Toxic Trio (Domestic abuse, parents' mental health issues and parents'substance abuse)

Pull factors include:

- Wanting to be with family/friends
- Drugs, money and any exchangeable item
- Peer pressure
- For those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children there will be 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 also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them, or we will take the relevant action.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology."

CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

In all cases, those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Child sexual exploitation is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess.

As staff we are aware that the indicators for child sexual exploitation can sometimes be mistaken for 'normal' adolescent behaviours. It requires knowledge, skills, professional curiosity to ensure that the signs and symptoms are interpreted correctly, and appropriate support is given.

Indicators a child may be at risk of CSE include:

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late;
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education;
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation;
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections;
- Mood swings or changes in emotional wellbeing;
- Drug and alcohol misuse;
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

CSE can happen to a child of any age, gender, ability or social status. Often the victim of CSE is not aware that they are being exploited and do not see themselves as a victim.

Within our schools, we educate all staff in the signs and indicators of sexual exploitation. We use the Pan Cheshire Child Exploitation Operating Protocol to identify children who are at risk and the DSL will share this information as appropriate with Warrington's MASH.

Staff have been made aware of the Pan-Cheshire CSE policy, procedures and Screening tool. Child Exploitation.

All staff are alert to possible indicators and will raise concerns as appropriate. They are aware of the pan-Cheshire CSE policy and procedures and of the screening tool including where to find it, how to complete it and what happens next.

Criminal Exploitation:

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

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

- Can affect any child (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- Can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;

- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults;
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

County Lines

County Lines is a form of criminal exploitation whereby gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, child referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- Go missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from their own;
- Have been the perpetrator or **alleged** perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime) as well as the victim;
- Are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- Are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- Are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- Owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- Have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

Cyberbullying

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

Our schools recognise that they must take note of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school and so we will respond to any bullying including cyber-bullying that we become aware of carried out by children when they are away from the site.

Cyber-bullying is defined as "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 himself/herself."

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation

- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in on-line forums

Cyber-bullying may be at a level where it is criminal.

If we become aware of any incidents of cyberbullying, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate, or we are required to do so.

Domestic abuse/violence

All our children have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that all children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse.

We are alert to the indicators of abuse, and we have a planned approach to supporting children in a proactive way.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. We understand that the term domestic abuse captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

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 domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Domestic abuse can affect anybody; it occurs across all of society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth or geography. Domestic abuse affects significant numbers of children and their families causing immediate harm as well as damaging future life chances. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'.

Domestic abuse negatively affects children. We know that they are often more aware of what is happening than parents think. How they respond depends on their age, personality and support network; but they recover best when they are helped to understand and to process what is happening/has happened to them.

Their experiences will shape their self-worth, identity, and ability to relate to others in childhood and adulthood; making it much more difficult to succeed at school and develop friendships.

To support our children, we:

- Have an ethos which puts children's wellbeing at the heart of all that we do
- Create a predictable school life with set routines
- Ensure that rules and expectations are clearly stated and understood by all
- Understand that oppositional and manipulative behaviours are not attempts to 'provoke us', but may be attempts by these children to control their world when so much feels out of control for them

- Model respectful and caring behaviour, positive conflict resolution and respectful interactions. Helping children learn not only what not to do, but what to do instead
- Use the language of choice, making clear the benefits and negative consequences of their choices. Ensuring that we follow through with any consequences or sanctions
- Support children to put feelings into words. We build up a vocabulary of emotional words with them so that they can begin to express their feelings more appropriately/accurately (*A child exposed to domestic abuse may have seen a lot of behaviours that express strong feelings, but may not have heard words to appropriately express/ describe these feelings)*
- Understand that the child may experience conflicting and confusing emotions when thinking of or talking about their parents
- Create opportunities for children to feel successful. We let the child know that they matter; taking an active interest in them
- Accept that they may not be willing or able to talk about it right away (if ever)
- Provide effective, non-verbal, systems for children to access support
- Provide reassurance that only people who need to know about the incident will know
- Allow the child, where necessary, to safely store work in school or shred it after completion when providing interventions
- Have visible and accessible worry boxes/internal support systems /information regarding external sources of support e.g. Childline etc.
- Provide opportunities to teach about and discuss healthy and unhealthy relationships

Emotional abuse

Staff are all aware that emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which can cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

We understand that it may involve the following:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person

- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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

Honour Based Abuse including Breast ironing, FGM and Forced Marriage

Staff are aware of "Honour-based' Abuse (HBA) which encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and staff will handle and escalate as such; they are alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA." *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026"*

Awareness raising has taken place around HBA; staff are alert to possible indicators. They are aware that forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; that it is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence and that HBV and FM can affect both young men and women.

Our schools would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would speak to Warrington MASH before sharing our concerns with the family.

Breast Ironing also known as Breast Flattening

Staff have been made aware of an act of abuse performed on girls (from around the age of 9 years old) in which their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded, burned with heated objects or covered with an elastic belt to prevent or delay the development of their breasts; the intention being to protect the child from rape, forced marriage, sexual harassment or removal from education. It is a practice in Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa. It is often carried out by the girl's mother. Staff are clear that they would follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting this abuse where it is suspected**.**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (also known as female circumcision, cutting or Sunna) and that it is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Staff are also aware that FGM

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

Indications that FGM may be about to take place:

- When a female family elder is around, particularly when she is visiting from a country of origin.
- Reference to FGM in conversation e.g. a girl may tell other children about it.
- A girl may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'.
- A girl may request help from a teacher or another adult if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.

- A girl may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.
- A girl being withdrawn from PSHE or from learning about FGM (parents may wish to keep her uninformed about her body and rights)

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet possibly with bladder or menstrual problems
- Unusual /noticeable change in behaviour after a lengthy absence
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- Asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear
- Prolonged absences/ persistent unexplained absence from school/college
- Seek to be excused from physical exercise without the support of their GP
- Child not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- Close supervision of child by family/carers

Teachers in our schools are aware of their responsibilities under section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 which says that "If a **teacher**, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the **teacher** must report this to the police".

Members of our school communities are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. They have been made aware that FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old. Potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM have been shared and the next steps have been identified, in that we take the same course of action as we would with any form of abuse; the Designated Safeguarding Lead plays a full part in the process of identification recording and reporting. We are mindful that girls at risk of FGM may

not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity is always shown when approaching the subject.

Forced Marriage

Staff are aware of Forced Marriage and that it is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

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

Indications that a Child is at risk of Forced Marriage:

Staff are aware that they need to be aware of significant changes in the child's presentation, emotional and physical, in dress and behaviour.

- Appearing anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem
- Self-harming, self-cutting or anorexia
- Criminal activity e.g. shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol
- Declining performance, aspirations or motivation
- Not allowed to attend any extra-curricular or after school activities
- Girls may be accompanied to and from school
- Attending school but absenting themselves from lessons
- Stopping attendance at school
- A family history of older siblings leaving education early and marrying early

The Forced Marriage Unit has published https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf , with pages 32-36 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact:

020 7008 0151 or email: fmu@fco.gov.uk. We would also refer to the forced marriage guidance within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, which has been updated to reflect legal changes in February 2023.

Actions our school takes in relation to take around Honour Based Abuse:

- When managing requests for absence, we use an absence request form which requests information on the reason for the absence and if necessary, we will liaise with other schools
- The Headteacher or appropriate representative requires a meeting with parents to discuss applications for extended leave of absence during term time, as we feel this can provide an opportunity to gather important information. We ask for the precise location of where the child is going; the purpose of the visit; the return date and whether it is estimated or fixed
- We check in with the child/children to see if they know and corroborate the purpose of the visit.
- If a return date has been specified and a child has not returned to school, we would contact our Attendance/Education Welfare Officer. We would never remove the child from the roll without first making enquiries about their disappearance in line with Warrington's Children Missing Education Procedures and referring the case to the police and Children's Services as appropriate.

Modern Day Slavery

The Modern Slavery Act came into Force in 2015. Modern Slavery can take many forms including the trafficking of people, forced labour, servitude and slavery.

Staff are aware that:

- a person commits an offence if they knowingly hold another person in slavery or servitude or if they knowingly require another person to perform forced or compulsory labour
- it is an offence to arrange or facilitate the travel of a person with a view to them being exploited. These are serious offences carrying a penalty of up to life imprisonment

- any consent victims have given to their treatment will be irrelevant where they have been coerced, deceived or provided with payment or benefit to achieve that consent
- children (under 18 years) are considered victims of trafficking, whether or not they have been coerced, deceived or paid to secure their compliance. They need only to have been recruited, transported or harbored for the purpose of exploitation.

Trafficked Children

Human trafficking is defined by the United Nations, in respect of children, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

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

Our schools are alert to the signs both for our children and for their families and are aware that this may be if they:

- Show signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy
- Have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- Are required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
- Work in various locations
- Have limited freedom of movement
- Appear to be missing for periods
- Are known to beg for money
- Are being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
- Are one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- Have not been registered with or attended a GP practice
- Are excessively afraid of being deported
- Look malnourished or unkempt
- Are withdrawn, anxious and unwilling to interact
- Are under the control and influence of others

- Live in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation
- Have no access or control of their passport or identity documents
- Appear scared, avoid eye contact, and can be untrusting
- Show signs of abuse and/or has health issues

For those children who are internally trafficked within the UK indicators include:

- Physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
- Prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy
- Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation / the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Being in the community in clothing unusual for a child i.e. inappropriate for age/ borrowing clothing from older people
- Relationship with a significantly older partner
- Accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones etc. with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having not been at home
- Having keys to premises other than those known about
- Low self- image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity
- Truancy / disengagement with education
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child has no known links
- Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.

  These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is being trafficked, this will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be reported 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 the serious impairment of the child's health or development
- May occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse
- Once a child is born, may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- May also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs
- May potentially be fatal
- Causes great distress to children and leads to poor outcomes in the short and long-term
- Has possible consequences which may include an array of health and mental health problems, difficulties in forming attachment and relationships, lower educational achievements, an increased risk of substance misuse, higher risk of experiencing abuse as well as difficulties in assuming parenting responsibilities later in life.

The degree to which children are affected during their childhood and later in adulthood depends on the type, severity and frequency of the maltreatment and on what support mechanisms and coping strategies were available to the child

We are also mindful of the effects of adolescent neglect as this is as damaging as other forms of maltreatment - increasing the risk of arrest, offending and violent crime in late adolescence, and the risk of arrest and drug use in early adulthood.

If we suspect neglect, we will use the Neglect Strategy

Warrington Safeguarding Partnership Neglect Strategy

Online Safety

With the current speed of on-line change, some practitioners, parents and carers have only a limited understanding of online risks and issues. Parents may underestimate how often their children come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet and may be unsure about how to respond.

Some of the risks could be:

- **content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying
- **commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your children, children or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group, reportphishing@apwg.org

The schools therefore seek to provide information and awareness to staff, children and their parents through:

- Acceptable use agreements for children, teachers, parents/carers and governors
- Curriculum activities involving raising awareness around staying safe online
- Information included in letters, newsletters, web site
- High profile events / campaigns e.g. Online Safety Day
- Building awareness around information that is held on relevant web sites and or publications

Cyber crime: Preventing young people from getting involved

Children are getting involved in cybercrime, many do it for fun without realising the consequences of their actions – but the penalties can be severe. Cybercrime is a serious criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act. If we become aware of any incidents of cyber crimes, we will consider each case individually as to any criminal act that may have been committed. The school will pass on information to the police if it feels that it is appropriate, or we are required to do so.

Risks associated with Gaming

Online gaming is an activity that the majority of children and many adults get involved in.

Our schools raise awareness by:

- Talking to parents and carers about the games their children play and help them identify whether they are appropriate
- Supporting parents in identifying the most effective way of safeguarding their children by using parental controls and child safety mode
- Talking to parents about setting boundaries and time limits when games are played
- Highlighting relevant resources
- Making our children aware of the dangers including of online grooming and how to keep themselves safe
- Making our children aware of how to report concerns

Child on child abuse

Children can abuse other children and this is often referred to as child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm

- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images including AI-generated or altered images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- 'Up skirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

Staff are clear on our procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and do not take it any less serious than adult to child abuse; they are aware that it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We ensure that we apply the same thresholds.

Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged then the school follows the guidance issued by the DfE in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Where sharing nudes or semi nudes (youth produced sexual images) are part of the abuse then the school follows the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings

Physical abuse

Staff are aware of the signs of potential physical abuse and that it might involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

They are also aware that physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

The Beam Trust adheres to the Prevent Duty Guidance, 2023 seeks to protect children against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent them being drawn into terrorism; including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Radicalisation, is defined as the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Our school communities have been made aware of the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism; they are also aware that the normalisation of extreme views may make children vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

In order to raise awareness and reduce risks we ensure that our preventative work is specifically considered, outlined and highlighted in all relevant policies and procedures,

including those for Information technology, Special Educational Needs, attendance, assemblies, the use of school premises by external agencies, behaviour and anti-bullying and the RE and PSHE curriculum.

Our taught curriculum includes educating children of how people with extreme views share these with others; we are committed to ensuring that our children are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching each school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

All staff have received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism.

The Beam Trust is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern; therefore, concerns need to be recorded and discussed with the DSL; with timely, appropriate action then being taken.

The **Prevent Duty** requires that all staff are aware of the signs that a child maybe vulnerable to radicalisation. The risks will need to be considered for political; environmental; animal rights; or faith-based extremism that may lead to a child becoming radicalised.

If we suspect a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, including being radicalised we would contact:
Warrington MASH **and** contact a Police Prevent officer **01606 362121** prevent@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis: the child is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;

- Personal Crisis: they may be experiencing family tensions/ a sense of isolation/ low self-esteem. They may have dissociated from their existing friendship group/ become involved with a different group of friends/ may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances: migration/local community tensions/ events affecting the child's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism/ discrimination/ aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspiration: the child may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Experiences of Criminality: which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration
- Special Educational Needs: children may experience difficulties with social interaction/ empathy with others/ understanding the consequences of their actions/ awareness of the motivations of others
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis

Where necessary individuals may be discussed at Channel:

Staff are aware of Channel being a partnership approach to support individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists.

Channel Panels meet monthly. Attendees sign a Confidentiality Agreement and share case information. Discussion covers the vulnerabilities of individuals and their families, current support, and risks for the individual and community. Attendees agree if the case is appropriate for Channel and the support plan which is needed. For those already open to Panel support plans are tailored, building on existing support, and may consist of help with family problems, mental health support, religious education, mentoring etc.

For those who are not Channel appropriate: a safe exit from Channel or a referral elsewhere is discussed.

In Warrington, the Education Safeguarding team represent education settings at these meetings. This means that a team representative may contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead before a meeting to request our view regarding the lived experience of the young person. They contact us afterwards to give us an update.

Serious violence

Serious violence may include physical assault, carrying, threatening with or using weapons, and may be linked to peer conflict, bullying or criminal exploitation. Concerns that a child is carrying or using a weapon, or intends to do so, must be reported immediately to the DSL or deputy. The DSL will assess risk to the child and others, consider wider information, and put in place a safety and support plan where required, including action to de-escalate peer conflict. Particular attention will be given to children with disrupted education, including suspension, exclusion, alternative provision or a history of offending, and to heightened risk around the school day.

All staff are aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Staff are aware of the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.
Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK

Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including AI-generated images

This means the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude visual content by a person under 18. It includes photographs, videos, livestreams, digitally altered images and images wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'. Every incident, whether described as consensual or non-consensual, requires a safeguarding response. The response will be proportionate and will consider age, development, coercion, exploitation, vulnerability, intent and any wider risk
While sexting can take place in a consensual relationship between two children under the age of 18, the use of Sexted images in revenge following a relationship breakdown is becoming more commonplace. Sexting can also be used as a form of sexual exploitation and take place between strangers.

As the average age of first smartphone or camera enabled tablet is 6 years old, sexting is an issue that requires awareness raising across all ages.

Each school uses age appropriate educational material to raise awareness, to promote safety and deal with pressure. Parents are made aware that they can come to the school for advice.

Sexual abuse

Staff are aware of sexual abuse and that:

- It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening
- The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing

- It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse
- It can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse
- It is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education see child-on-child abuse.