



# De La Salle School

## **CHILD PROTECTION, PREVENT AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

<b>Status</b>	Statutory
<b>Responsible Governors' Committee</b>	Behaviour, Attitudes and Personal Development
<b>Responsible Person</b>	Anna De'Ath
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## Version Control

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October 2023	P4 Child protection statement P6. Updates to Legislation and Guidance P8. Updates to names, roles and responsibilities P17 Updates to managing allegations against adults P19 Addition: Low Level Concerns P24 Additional information to online safety P25 Additional information regarding filtering and monitoring systems P43 Additional information regarding safeguarding children who attend off-site provision P45 The Safeguarding Curriculum P46 Proactive Safeguarding P47 Monitoring and Quality Assurance



## **OUR MISSION**

To provide a safe and inspiring environment where all fulfil their potential.

In keeping with our mission statement, De La Salle School is committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all the children in its community. We believe all children have the right to be in a safe environment and having a balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them, and to be fully included in all aspects of school life.

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## 1. Policy statement and principals

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio. Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- representatives of the whole-school community of pupils, parents, staff and governors will be involved in policy development and review
- We review policies at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.
- We aim to prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development, please see updated guidance in KSIE 2020.

### Child Protection Statement

At De La Salle School, we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and we expect all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. Everyone has a responsibility to act, without delay, to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. The school seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.

*'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the **best interests** of the child.'*  
(DFE 2023)

### Policy principles

- Welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support such as supervision. Supervision is offered regularly by DSL and DSL primarily to PSMs although if any member of staff is experiencing difficulties after dealing with a safeguarding issue, this can be offered to any member of staff.
- Training will be provided annually depending on that year's focus and to ensure all staff have read the school's policy and understood it.

### Policy aims

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

**The school will foster an ongoing culture of vigilance to maintain a safer environment for all pupils by:**

- Ensuring that senior members of staff have undertaken an approved Safer Recruitment course and are committed to working to the guidelines recommended
- Checking the suitability of all prospective staff and volunteers during the recruitment process by checking the Independent Safeguarding Authority register of people cleared to work with children as well as carrying out a Disclosure and Barring Service check
- Formulating an induction policy and programme for new staff, students and volunteers with the emphasis on safeguarding children
- Ensuring that the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection has undergone suitable training for their role and that this training is refreshed every 2 years
- Arranging whole school staff training in Child Protection every 2 years. The training to include all staff, e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, administration and caretaking staff, and anyone else who has regular contact with the pupils. Each year staff sign that they have read the updated KSIE and the school's CP policy as well as complete a quiz to check understanding. This is followed up later in the year by further CPD on relevant issues
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Supporting pupils who have been abused by co-operating with other professionals (as recommended by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2018) to carry out our responsibilities outlined in any Child protection Plan issued at a Child Protection Case Conference
- Establishing a safer environment in which children can learn and develop.

## **2. Definitions and terminology**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

**Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes** (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

The partners have named all schools as 'relevant agencies' which places us under a statutory duty to co-operate with local, published arrangements. This can be viewed at:

<https://sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

- The three safeguarding partners should agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.
- To fulfil this role, the three safeguarding partners must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies.
- All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements.

### 3. Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

All staff should read Part One of this guidance. All staff can access a copy of this guidance in the Safeguarding area of school intranet. This should be read and then staff, DSL, SLT and Governors sign to say that they have read and understood the guidance. DSL/SLT and Governors must read the whole document.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

[The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques

[The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18

[Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children

[Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools’ duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

The guidance should be read alongside:

- departmental advice [What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused - Advice for Practitioners](#)
- departmental advice [COVID-19: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#)

Please note that if you are ever concerned about the welfare of a child or family you must call The Contact Centre on 01744 676600 or, if it is after 5pm, The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 03450500148.

**Please contact the Police on 999 if you feel that a child or young person is in immediate danger.**

### Representation at meetings during school holidays

Due to the term-time working pattern of school staff, and the statutory time scales for multi-

agency meetings such as Child Protection Conferences, it can often be the case that schools may be unable to attend certain meetings during school holidays. However, De La Salle recognises that continuity is vital and that school input into said meetings is essential. Therefore, if schools are aware that they are unable to attend a meeting during the holidays, a referral will be completed to the Safeguarding Children in Education (SCIE) Officer, who is based within the Safeguarding Unit within the Local Authority. A report will still be completed and submitted by school and a handover meeting will be held between the SCIE officer and the school representative prior to the meeting, to ensure all information is shared and communicated effectively. The SCIE Officer will then feedback any outcomes of the meeting back to school.

#### **Supervision of Designated Safeguarding Leads and Frontline Staff**

Here at De La Salle we recognise that dealing with safeguarding and child protection concerns can be emotionally distressing for the member of staff involved. We also recognise that working in isolation can be detrimental and presents a high risk when making decisions relating to child protection. Therefore, reflective practice is also essential, not only for the DSL but also for whole school safeguarding procedures. Therefore, we aim to support staff who are frequently dealing with child protection concerns by offering regular, formal and recorded supervision. We believe this to be fundamental in creating a culture where safeguarding practice is robust and staff well-being is valued.

#### **4. Equality Statement**

Some young people have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise young people's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all young people have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to young people who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalization
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

#### **5. Roles and responsibilities**

##### **Key personnel – Safeguarding Team**

**The designated senior lead (DSL) for child protection is Mrs. A De'Ath, Assistant Headteacher**

Contact details: email: [deatha@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:deatha@delasalleschool.org.uk) Tel: 01744 20511

**The deputy designated lead (DDSL) is Mr Paul Ross, Deputy Headteacher.**

Contact details: email: [rossp@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:rossp@delasalleschool.org.uk) Tel: 01744 20511

**The nominated safeguarding governor is: Mrs. T Sims (Chair of Governors)**

Contact details: email: [CllrTSims@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:CllrTSims@sthelens.gov.uk) Tel: 07740 422474

## The head teacher is Mr. A. Rannard

Contact details: email: [rannarda@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:rannarda@delasalleschool.org.uk) Tel: 01744 20511

All schools should appoint a member of the senior leadership team to coordinate child protection arrangements. We have both the DSP and DDSP on the SLT team. We also have two other members of SLT trained up to DSL level.

The safeguarding team also includes the pastoral support managers:

Mr. Mather ([matherj@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:matherj@delasalleschool.org.uk)) – Year 7

Mrs. Graham ([grahamv@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:grahamv@delasalleschool.org.uk)) -Year 8 (Acting PSM)

Mr. Canning ([canningl@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:canningl@delasalleschool.org.uk)) – Year 9

Mrs. Moran ([morans@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:morans@delasalleschool.org.uk)) – Year 10

Mrs. Marshall ([marshallk@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:marshallk@delasalleschool.org.uk)) – Year 11

The DSL and DDSL will quality assure, advise and supervise the pastoral support managers (PSMs).

The PSMs will routinely attend FAM meetings, core groups, manage EHATs and monitor and work with children on a day-to-day basis. They will also refer out to external agencies such as Barnados, Listening Ear, CAHMS and school nurse. They may attend some Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC), with DSL/DDSL support where appropriate.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- be appropriately trained, with updates every two years as provided by the Safeguarding Partnership
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- keep the headteacher informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- have an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention
- keep detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation
- ensure that when a pupil leaves the school, their information is passed to their new school and the pupil's social worker is informed
- where children leave the school, ensures the child protection file is copied for any new school as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file
- attend and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinate the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the Safeguarding Partners
- ensure that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensure that the child protection policy is regularly reviewed and updated annually
- liaise with the nominated governor and head teacher (where the DSL role is not carried out by the head teacher) as appropriate
- keep a record of staff attendance at child protection training
- make the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website and by other means
- ensure parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- work with the head teacher to ensure cases concerning a member of staff are referred appropriately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

**The deputy designated lead** is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

**The governing body** ensures that the school:

- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures, including a staff code of conduct that is reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website and by other means
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children
- Develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head teacher, receives information about the school's safeguarding arrangements on induction and appropriate child protection training, which is regularly updated. The DSL receives refresher training at two-yearly intervals
- ensures that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection
- ensures that the school contributes to inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified
- Considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher. It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures are in accordance with the Safeguarding Partners' and national guidance.

The local safeguarding partnership has now replaced the Section 175 audit with quality assurance visits to the school. A report will be generated pointing out any areas for improvement. It is part of the governing body's duties to ensure any weaknesses are rectified without delay.

**The head teacher:**

- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online
- liaises with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where an allegation is made against a member of staff
- Ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## **6 Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we have agreed staff standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff. Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them

- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse and neglect
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact and information-sharing
- asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school and the Safeguarding Partnership's procedures
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care
- following the school's rules with regard to communication with pupils and use of social media and online networking

## **7 Abuse of trust**

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

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

The school's staff standards set out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members.

## **8 Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- a. Children who have a social worker\*
- b. is disabled and has specific additional needs
- c. has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- d. is a young carer
- e. is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups (County Lines)
- f. is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- g. is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- h. is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- i. is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- j. is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves

- k. has returned home to their family from care
- l. is a privately fostered child”.

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

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions.

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs, such as abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. These experiences can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The local authority tell us if a child has a social worker, and the DSL and pastoral staff hold and use this information in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes, such as when decisions are made on:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support

Governing boards should ensure there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

See appendix 4 for a flowchart of actions.

## **9 Helping children to keep themselves safe**

Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons and through all aspects of school life. Our approach is designed to help children to think about risks they may encounter and with staff work out how those risks might be overcome. Discussions about risk are empowering and enabling for all children and promote sensible behaviour rather than fear or anxiety. Children are taught how to conduct themselves and how to behave in a responsible manner. Children are also reminded regularly about e-safety and tackling bullying procedures. The school Relationships and Sex Education Policy maps out the provision in school for some of these issues. The school continually promotes an ethos of respect for children, and pupils are encouraged to speak to a member of staff in confidence about any worries they may have.

## **10 Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

### **Indicators**

There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (p42-44) focuses on the role of schools and colleges.

## **11 FGM – Mandatory Reporting Duty**

**Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015)** places a **statutory duty upon teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either

through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information)

*Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. DFE 2023*

The school will also consult the government guidance [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) (revised 2016) and will have reference to guidance provided by the National FGM Centre [FGM Schools Guidance - National FGM Centre](#).

In addition, the school recognises the important role schools have in safeguarding children from [Forced Marriage](#). The Forced Marriage Unit has published [Multi-agency statutory guidance](#), with pages 79-84 focusing on the role of schools and colleges. The school is clear that when it comes to the marriage of a child, the distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage does not exist. Following the [Marriage and Civil Partnership \(Minimum Age\) Act 2022](#), which came into force in February 2023, it is an offence to engage in any conduct for the purpose of causing a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. Such a marriage is deemed a forced marriage. (The same legislation also provides that the minimum age at which one can legally marry or enter into a civil partnership in England and Wales is 18.) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information. Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email: [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk).

The [Teachers’ Standards](#) (DfE 2013, updated 2021) also requires all teachers to ‘uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, including:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils’ vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

In addition, the **Sexual Offences Act 2003** makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person below the age of 18, even if that pupil is over the age of consent. In addition, it would be a breach of trust to have a relationship with any school student over the age of 18.

The **Human Rights Act 1998** sets out fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the **European Convention on Human Rights** that are deemed to apply within the UK. It compels public organisations to protect and respect an individual’s human rights when they make decisions about them. Under the human Rights Act it is

unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, and
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education

We recognise that being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances.

Schools and colleges also have obligations under the **Equality Act 2010** whereby schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). Whilst all of the above protections are important, in the context of safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and the legal duties placed on schools and colleges in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, governing bodies and proprietors should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils and students with regard to particular protected characteristics - including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race. Guidance to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the act can be found at [Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#).

In addition, the **Public Sector Equality Duty** places a general duty on schools and colleges to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance the equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and specific consideration must be given to equality implications such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism. Further information can be found in the document [Technical Guidance on Public Sector Equality Duty: England](#).

**The school and this policy also take account of additional guidance including:**

- [CSE Definition and guidance for practitioners](#) DFE 2017
- [Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines Guidance](#) DFE 2017
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act](#) DFE 2006
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) HMG 2018
- [The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#) DFE 2015
- [How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq](#) DFE 2015 (Briefing note for schools)
- The [Ofsted School Inspection Handbook](#) and Ofsted guidance: [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](#) DFE 2015
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) DDCMS / UKCIS 2020
- [Serious Violence Duty: statutory guidance](#) Home Office 2022
- [Domestic Abuse: statutory guidance](#) Home Office 2022
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) DFE 2022
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools](#) 2022 DFE 2022
- Other DFE statutory guidance including: online safety and children who go missing from home or care is found here: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children>

## **12 Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person (*DSL*) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- following the procedures laid down in our whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- co-operating fully with relevant statutory agencies

## **13 Complaints procedure**

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil or attempting to humiliate them, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the head teacher and governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is included in our policy documentation.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

## **14 If you have concerns about a colleague**

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

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

Staff are made aware of the NSPCC's whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285) where they can report any concerns over any of the school's safeguarding procedures.

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

## **15 Managing allegations against adults (including all staff, supply teachers and volunteers) working at or on behalf of the school**

All school staff and other adults working at or on behalf of the school will be aware of and work within the school's Code of Conduct and other relevant policies and procedures. The Staff Code of Conduct includes guidance for staff regarding the school expectations of the use of mobile phones, electronic equipment and social media.

All staff and volunteers must report any concerns about a member of staff's behaviour towards children (including supply staff and volunteers) to the Headteacher who will act as the case manager. Concerns can also be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Concerns about the headteacher should be raised with the Chair of Governors or nominated governor.

Local Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency procedures will be followed in all cases where it is alleged that a member of staff has:

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

The school's managing allegations against staff and volunteers policy and procedures will support everyone to take appropriate action. This includes a flowchart to guide colleagues thinking.

In some circumstances, the school will have to consider an allegation against an individual who is not directly employed by the organisation and where our disciplinary procedures do not fully apply (for example supply teachers). Whilst the school is not the employer of the individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with properly and will liaise where appropriate with relevant parties. The school will not cease to use the services of a supply teacher as a result of safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

In addition, School Improvement Liverpool provide an online resource 'Safeguarding-Mate' to support colleagues : <https://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/safeguarding-mate/>

Concerns can also be taken directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), if needed, via Children's Services.

Part 4 of the DFE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education provides further guidance. In addition to the school's own procedures, multi-agency procedures can be found on the school's website.

There are occasions when a person who works with children behaves in a way that is concerning and raises questions about their ability to recognise and take steps to safeguard children in their care that may not always meet the threshold of LADO. As an employer the school has a duty to consider whether the issue indicates that they are unsuitable to continue in their role for the immediate future or indefinitely. These are known as issues of suitability and if they do not meet the harm threshold for allegations they, would be dealt with via the school's disciplinary and low-level concerns procedures. Issues of suitability can include:

- Where an employee is being investigated for an offence against an adult, or
- Their behaviour in their personal lives brings into question their suitability to work with children

However, if an adult who works with children has involvement from Children's Services in respect of their own child, or a child that they live with or have contact with, it is the responsibility of Children's Services to assess the immediate concern and inform the LADO of whether the adult poses a risk to children. Examples of this may include:

- Allegations of assault, physical or emotional, on their own child or on a child they live with or have contact with
- Domestic abuse
- Substance misuse
- Lives with or is in a relationship with a person who is identified as a risk to children

The situation would meet the threshold of LADO should the child in question be made subject to a Child Protection plan. This is because Children's Services has determined that the adult presents a risk to the associated child either directly or due to a failure to protect.

If school are made aware of any of the circumstances detailed above, they will have a consultation with the LADO in order to determine whether the threshold is met for a referral under the managing allegations process.

All staff should ensure that they disclose information about themselves relating to the above to the Head teacher as soon as possible. School will create an environment and culture where staff are supported and empowered to be able to do this.

If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purpose of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), the school will follow its own policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

### Low Level Concerns

Staff must report low level concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher, (KCSiE 2023).

If this information is reported to the DSL, they will inform the headteacher in a timely fashion and the headteacher should be the ultimate decision maker. The school will take appropriate action with any concerns that are raised and follow the appropriate policies and guidance in that situation.

We retain all records of low-level concerns (including those which are subsequently deemed by the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead to relate to behaviour which is entirely consistent with the staff code of conduct) in a central low-level concerns file (either electronic or hard copy). Where multiple low-level concerns have been shared regarding the same individual these are kept in chronological order as a running Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with children 15 Return to contents record, and with a timeline alongside (an example of which is appended at Appendix F). These records should be kept confidential and held securely, with access afforded only to a limited number of individuals such as the Headteacher//DSL and the individual they report to; and Senior HR Officer.

The Headteacher/Principal or Safeguarding Lead may store the central low-level concerns file with the other safeguarding and child protection records. The rationale for storing such records on a central file, rather than in staff members' personnel files, is that:

- a) it makes it easier to (i) address possible issues referred to at paragraph 8.20.1(c), and (ii) review the file and spot any potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour;
- b) it reassures staff and encourages them to share low-level concerns. 9.4 Some low-level concerns may also involve issues of misconduct or poor performance, and may trigger an organisation's disciplinary, capability, grievance, whistleblowing or other procedures. Where these issues would ordinarily require records to be made and retained on the staff member's personnel file, this should be done in the normal way, in addition to the records of the low-level concern(s) being retained in a central low-level concerns file.

Our school recognises that there may be times when there are concerns about a professional's behaviour which do not meet the harm threshold as set out in section 15 of this policy. This includes third party staff and volunteers. Concerns such as this may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. Examples of this may be:

- suspicion, complaint or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of our school; or
- as a result of vetting checks undertaken during recruitment

Our school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture in which all concerns are shared responsibly, in a timely way with the right person, and are recorded and dealt with appropriately is critical to effective safeguarding practice. This culture enables the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at the earliest possible stage, minimises the risk of abuse and ensures that all adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with our ethos and values. This culture also empowers individuals to share concerns with key staff about their own behaviour at the earliest possible opportunity.

The term 'low level concern' does not mean that the behaviour is insignificant. It means a behaviour towards a child which does not meet the threshold set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. **A low-level concern is any concern (no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease) that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:**

- is not consistent with the staff code of conduct, including conduct outside of the workplace,

and/or

- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough for 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;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.

Behaviours which are not consistent with the standards and values of our school, and which do not meet the expectations set out in our code of conduct for staff, must be addressed. Behaviours such as this, can exist on a spectrum from inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is essential that concerns such as this are shared responsibly and with the right person, and that they are recorded and dealt with appropriately. Effective reporting and management of such concerns also protects staff from potential false allegations of misunderstandings. Concerns should be shared as soon as is reasonably possible, and ideally within 24 hours of becoming aware of a problem, however it is never too late to share a concern.

Occasionally a member of staff may find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or may appear compromising to others. Equally, a member of staff may have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider to fall below the standards set out within our code of conduct for staff. Self-reporting such circumstances is actively encouraged as it allows issues to be dealt with at the earliest opportunity and it is an important means of maintaining our culture of everyone aspiring to have the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.

Staff do not need to be able to determine whether their concern is a low-level concern, or if it would be dealt with under our managing allegations policy. Staff must simply be empowered to share their concern. The determination regarding process will be made by the designated safeguarding lead and headteacher. The Headteacher will appoint a member of the senior leadership team to investigate the issue in line with policies and procedures.

Low level concerns should be reported in writing to the Headteacher.

Where a low-level concern is in relation to the Headteacher, it should be shared with the Chair of Governors.

If a report of a low-level concern is received, it will be dealt with responsively, sensitively, and proportionately. Where a concern is reported, the Headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly with the person who raised the concern (unless it has been raised anonymously), and by speaking to the individual involved along with any witnesses. The information collected will help to categorise the behaviour and determine what further action may needed to be taken. Support and advice will be provided to ensure any identified behaviours can be corrected at an early stage.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and this record should include the details of the concern, the context and the action taken, including the rationale for any decisions. Records must be kept confidential and held securely in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation. Records will be kept in individual personnel files and will be retained for the duration of the individual's employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, school will decide on a course of action either through our disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, referral to LADO.

The Headteacher will regularly review all low-level concerns reported to them, along with the outcome of the concern. This is to ensure there is appropriate scrutiny and analysis of information in order to agree at what point a series of low-level concerns or a pattern of behaviour would escalate and meet the threshold set out in section 15 of this policy and part 4 of **Keeping Children**

**Safe in Education 2023.** The DSL will meet with the Headteacher to make them aware of any concern that has been raised as soon as possible (on the same day) and maintain regular contact to update. The Headteacher and DSL will review low level concerns termly. The Headteacher will further review cases with the Chair of governors.

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to an issue which would normally be included in a reference (specified in paragraph 441 of Keeping Children Safe in Education).

**LADO Secretary on 01744 671265**

Details of referral to LADO are found at: <https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk/scp/scp>

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023).

General guidance on whistleblowing can be found via: [Advice on Whistleblowing](#); and the [NSPCC's what you can do to report abuse dedicated helpline](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

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

## **16 Staff training**

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

New staff and governors will receive an explanation during their induction which includes the school's child protection policy, reporting and recording arrangements, the staff code of conduct and details for the DSL. All staff, including the head teacher and governors will receive training that is regularly updated and the DSP will receive training updated at least every two years, including training in inter-agency procedures.

Supply staff and other visiting staff are given the school's Visiting Staff Leaflet information.

## **17 Safer Recruitment**

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education – part 1 (2020) together with the Safeguarding partners and the school's individual procedures.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form which includes their employment history
- provide two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications
- be checked in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations as appropriate to their role
- provide evidence of their right to work in the UK
- be interviewed.

The school will also verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training. The Chair of Governors, the Headteacher, DSL and DDSL are all trained in safer recruitment.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy in the Welcome

pack. The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies that agency staff have been appropriately checked.

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

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with pupils.

### **Supervised volunteers**

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

## **Contractors**

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks where appropriate.

## **18 Site security**

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in at Reception and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The head teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site. The DSL also has a duty to alert the Headteacher to any physical, site issues that pose a potential risk to children.

## **19 Extended school and off-site arrangements**

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

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

## **20 Photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. See Data Protection Policy post-GDPR.

To protect pupils we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- seek parental consent
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them

## **21 Online Safety**

Our pupils increasingly use mobile phones, tablets and computers on a daily basis. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful

conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. School is under a duty to inform the police in cases where indecent images of children have been sent to others. This would include sexting and the offence of upskirting. School currently is certified as an online-aware school by National Online Safety.

Particular issues experienced by our students are:

- a) sending or receiving indecent images of other children
- b) the 'mob' mentality of bullying that can develop when a safeguarding issue happens in school
- c) sending inappropriate verbal messages - sexting

The school's e-safety policy explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school – such as our very sensitive firewall software (Securus). Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access these sites in school. Some pupils will undoubtedly be 'chatting' on mobiles or social networking sites at home and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using social media. Staff also receive advice regarding the use of social networking and electronic communication with pupils.

Students must have mobile phones switched off and out of sight from 8.30am until 3pm. Further details are available in the school's behaviour policy. If they are seen they are confiscated. The school is committed to educating its staff, governors and parents to keep our children safe in an increasingly online world. We have successfully completed an accreditation process with National Online Safety (NOS). This is a company providing CPD for staff, parents and governors as well as enhanced training for the DSL, DDSL and Pastoral Support Managers. The aim is to provide a better service to our students in keeping them safe online and is a direct response to the volume of issues we are seeing in daily practice.

The Department for Education issued new guidance to schools in June 2019, Teaching Online Safety in Schools. This contains helpful advice in subject-specific form which outlines opportunities in curricula to cover essential elements of online safety.

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

Schools and colleges should ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme whilst devising and implementing policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies and considering online safety whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead and any parental engagement.

Staff should bring immediately to the attention of the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior leadership team any behaviours by adults or children themselves that may be risky or harmful.

### **Filtering and Monitoring Systems**

Our Governing Body will ensure that our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and will regularly review their effectiveness. (KCSIE paragraph 141, September 2023). The school will adhere to the DFE [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges](#) which sets out that schools should:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs

Our school recognises that technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. The school will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety and will conduct a risk assessment which considers and reflects the risks our children face. The DDSL will undertake the LGfL online safety audit annually and liaise with the business manager to ensure that this includes a review of our filtering and monitoring systems.

The DfE guidance [Teaching Online Safety in Schools](#) (2023) also outlines how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of forthcoming and existing curriculum requirements.

Where children are asked to learn online at home, our school ensures this is done safely by referencing key guidance such as [Providing remote education: guidance for schools](#), [Safeguarding and remote education](#) and advice from the [London Grid for Learning](#)

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four categories:

#### **The 4 key categories of risk**

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

**Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism

**Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as 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, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

**Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

#### **To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:**

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
  - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
  - Keeping personal information private
  - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
  - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents’ evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the

- school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policy, which you can find on our website <http://www.delasalle.st-helens.sch.uk/>.

## Education

Opportunities to teach safeguarding, including online safety, are discussed at paragraph 93-95. Resources that could support schools and colleges include:

- [Be Internet Legends](#) developed by Parent Zone and Google is a free internet safety curriculum with PSHE accredited lesson plans and teaching resources for Key Stage 2 pupils
- [Disrespect nobody](#) is Home Office advice and includes resources on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography
- [Education for a connected world framework](#) from the UK Council for Internet Safety supports the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to RSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond (covering early years through to age 18) and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety.
- [PSHE association](#) provides guidance to schools on developing their PSHE curriculum
- [Teaching online safety in school](#) is departmental guidance outlining how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements
- [Thinkuknow](#) is the National Crime Agency/CEOPs education programme with age-specific resources
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) developed guidance and resources that can help with the teaching of the online safety component of the Computing Curriculum.

## Protecting children

Governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet Centre has published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: [UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring](#).

## 22 Categories of abuse

### Recognising abuse

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

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting

harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

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

**There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and each contains sub-categories and may involve more than one type such as domestic abuse or honour-based abuse.**

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. (This used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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.

### **Mental Health Issues**

- All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Only trained professionals should make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but staff are well placed to observe children and identify those whose behavior suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem, or be at risk of developing one
- Abuse, neglect and other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact, and it is key that staff are aware of how these experiences can affect children's mental health, behaviour and education
- Staff should take action on any mental health concerns that are also safeguarding concerns, following the school's child protection policy and speaking to the DSL or deputy
- There's DfE guidance available on [preventing and tackling bullying](#) and [mental health and behaviour](#), as well as Public Health England guidance on [promoting children's emotional health and wellbeing](#) and lesson plans and teaching materials from [Rise Above](#)

Governing boards should ensure there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

### **Domestic abuse and Operation Encompass**

All staff and volunteers are aware that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse.

They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) recognises children as victims of Domestic Abuse in their own right and sets out statutory multi-agency responsibilities, including specific responsibilities on education providers. Amongst other things, these include how school deliver an effective PHSCE / RSHE curriculum which supports children to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe, and covers the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, 'honour'-based abuse and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.

De La Salle is part of [Operation Encompass](#). Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse. Operation Encompass enables every child to receive support, regardless of whether the incident has been recorded as a crime and regardless of whether there is involvement with children's services. Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school about all police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children prior to the start of the next school day.

Key information about the principles of Operation Encompass is being cascaded to all other school staff and Governors. This includes discussing with staff how we can support children who are experiencing Domestic Abuse on a day-to-day basis, and particularly following an Operation Encompass notification. No actions taken by school will put the child/ren or adult victim at risk.

Operation Encompass notifications are stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information on CPOMS.

Operation Encompass data will form part of the termly safeguarding report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.

The school has used the Operation Encompass Key Adult Responsibilities checklist to ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken.

## **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Definitions taken from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2018).

## **23 Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures. All pupils and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining the school and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the tackling bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the head teacher and the DSP will consider implementing child protection procedures.

## **24 Child on child abuse**

Child-on-child abuse is the new name for peer-on-peer abuse. This is for consistency now that the standalone guidance has been incorporated into KCSIE since 2022. It also helps highlight that there can be an age imbalance, where peer-on-peer suggests the children are the same age

### **Allegations of abuse made against other pupils**

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for our students.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

### **Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse**

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

### **Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse**

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys

- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
  - How to recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
  - That even if there are no reports of peer-on-peer abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
  - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
    - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
    - A friend may make a report
    - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
    - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
  - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
  - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
  - The important role they have to play in preventing abuse and re child-on-child responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
  - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

### **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’)**

This is a suggested approach based on [guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety](#) for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Staff should report any concerns about sexting (youth produced sexual imagery or ‘nudes’) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or senior member of staff who will follow the guidance in [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) (UK Council for Child Internet Safety, December 2020). This document provides clarity as to how staff should respond to these incidents.

The school’s ICT Acceptable Use policy clearly outlines the way in which the school uses digital technologies and there are measures in place to ensure safe, responsible and respectful use by all. This policy also includes appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks. There is a clear code of conduct for staff and volunteers which sets out the use of digital technologies, mobile phones and personal photographic equipment around children. The school will consider, in particular, Children We Look After who might be put at risk by being included in publicity materials or school photographs.

### **Your responsibilities when responding to an incident**

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

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

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

### **Initial review meeting**

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

### **Further review by the DSL**

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

### **Informing parents/carers**

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

### **Referring to the police**

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101].

### **Recording incidents**

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them,

will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

### **Curriculum coverage**

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our PSHCE/RSE and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

### **Reporting systems for our pupils**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the pupils's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse. We use the confidential reporting system, SHARP and share emails/contact details for students to report concerns out of school hours.
- We regularly remind students how to use systems and processes through form time, assemblies, PSHCE lessons, ParentMail and Headteacher Newsletters
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

**Upskirting** is typically when a photograph is taken under a person's clothing without them knowing, for sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' 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.

### **Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of **any** age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all**

victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

### **What is sexual violence and sexual harassment?**

It is important that school and staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

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

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

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

### **What is consent?**

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

### **Serious Violent Crime**

All staff and governors will receive training on indicators and guides to spotting it. E.g.

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions - these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

### **25 Further Indicators of Abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they ‘tell’. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty.

For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated senior person.

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

A child who is being abused or neglected may:

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

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

**It is very important that staff report their concerns – they do not need ‘absolute proof’ that the child is at risk.**

### **Impact of abuse**

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

### **Taking action**

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSL immediately
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern in CPOMS
- Seek support for yourself if you are distressed

### **If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare**

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk, but have no ‘real’ evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical but inconclusive signs may

have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk.

The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the CPOMS system to record their concern. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

## **26 If a student discloses to you**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

### **During their conversations with the pupils staff will:**

- not promise confidentiality
- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- **under no circumstances ask investigative questions** – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil’s mother think about all this
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be the staff member’s way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSP even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on the CPOMS system. Do not leave the referral or leave it to the end of the day (when the child will have left for the day)
- staff should seek support if they feel distressed

### **Notifying parents**

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

However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care.

## 27 Referral to Safeguarding Partners

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

At the referral stage school is asked to assess the level of need.

### Level 1

Universal care or the care school would normally access and deliver.

### Level 2 Early Help and Early Help Offer

Here the school would normally offer the family an Early Help Assessment which sets up regular Family Action Meetings (FAMs) the family and other agencies. Level 2 also allows access, where the safeguarding partner deems appropriate, to enhanced services such as Family Intervention Workers or CAMHS. Families are managed using the EHAT (Early Help Assessment Tool) which is an online record of activities and action points needed to help the family.

### Level 3 – Child in Need, Section 17

This is where there is a clear risk of harm and would normally initiated a children and families assessment and the allocation of a social worker. It may initiate an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) where the safeguarding partners and agencies hold a joint meeting to assess the risk to the child which may, in turn, lead to a Child Protection Plan.

### Level 4 – Child Protection, Section 47

There is a major and imminent risk of harm to the child requiring immediate referral to relevant partners.

St. Helens is in the process of adopting the 'Signs of safety' model. This is an accepted practice model that gives a structure to many aspects of the CP processes. It can support discussions with children in school and is used as a template for initial child protection conferences and core groups. It essentially focuses people on what needs to happen and what is going well. The issues are split into three areas:

- What's working well? (Existing strengths and safety) Are parents engaging with professionals and what difference has this made
- What are possible concerns
- What needs to happen? (Future safety planning) What do you want CYPS to do with this information?

Full details and descriptions of need are available at the Safeguarding Partnership's Website. [https://sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com/files/descriptions\\_need.pdf?zoom\\_highlight=signs+of+safety#search=%22signs%20of%20safety%22](https://sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com/files/descriptions_need.pdf?zoom_highlight=signs+of+safety#search=%22signs%20of%20safety%22)

If the referrer suspects criminal activity, they must inform the police using the 101 system unless the crime is taking place at the moment when they should ring 999.

## 28 Children with harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 percent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the school will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

## 29 CSE – Criminal Sexual Exploitation of children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking. All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. An appropriate referral will be made to the safeguarding partnership in any cases of suspected CSE and reported to the police if laws have been potentially broken.

We work to an agreed pan-Merseyside protocol which can be found at:

[https://sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com/files/ch\\_exploit\\_pr.pdf?zoom\\_highlight=criminal+exploitation#search="criminal+exploitation"](https://sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com/files/ch_exploit_pr.pdf?zoom_highlight=criminal+exploitation#search=). This can also be found at the St. Helens Safeguarding Partnership procedures: <https://sthelensscb.proceduresonline.com>

## 30 CE – Criminal Exploitation

Being so close to Liverpool and with numerous motorway and airport links, St Helens children are at a particular vulnerability to exploitation by criminal gangs. Phenomena such as 'County Lines\*' have been discussed with students, staff and governors and the importance of tracking any absence or CME (children missing in education) worries.

- These are defined as forms of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity
- The imbalance can be due to age, as well as other factors like gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources
- In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (e.g. increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator
- It can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults
- It can be a one-off occurrence or be a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and can involve violence or threats of violence
- Victims can be exploited even when activity appears to be consensual. It can happen online as well as in person

### County lines\*

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes.

Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>4</sup> should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered

alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation. [National Crime Agency - Modern slavery and human-trafficking](#)

### **31 Confidentiality and sharing information**

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

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

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

### **32 Procedures and Record-Keeping**

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with GDPR principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept no longer than necessary
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- secure

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals using the CPOMS system.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information is not stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. GDPR has overtaken this somewhat and school does not allow portable memory devices to be used at school as it moved to secure online access over the last two years.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the head teacher or DSL.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

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

### **33 Reporting directly to safeguarding partners during school holidays.**

If you suspect a child is being abused, please call TheContact Centre on **01744 676600**.

Or in the case of an emergency outside normal officehours (after 5pm) you can contact the Emergency DutyTeam on 0345 050 0148

In holidays, the DSL or DDSL will make themselves available on a rota basis so please call school – 0174420511. There is also the dedicated e-mail: [safeguarding@delasalleschool.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@delasalleschool.org.uk)

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the headteacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety

- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Related safeguarding portfolio policies:

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Behaviour

Staff standards

Complaints

Health and safety

Attendance

Online safety

Mobile phone use

Equality

Relationships, Health and Sex Education

First aid

Curriculum

Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

Whistle-blowing

### **34 Special Circumstances**

#### **Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect.

The school ensures that appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

P. Ross is the designated LAC champion.

#### **Children staying with host families**

The school may make arrangements for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, Annex C to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

#### **Children with Special Educational Needs**

School will always involve the school's SENCOs (Jayne McCann and Claire Bullock) where a child with SEN is involved. Staff will receive training this year on some of barriers SEN children may face in raising issues, making disclosures and being referred to the correct services.

Children will always be treated in a way that takes into account their additional needs and by a specialist member of staff.

Teachers are aware that children and young people with SEND may mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to speak out if something isn't right.

Some children may be vulnerable because they:

- have additional communication needs
- they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- need intimate care or are isolated from others
- are dependent on adults for care.

NSPCC advice can be found at:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/deaf-and-disabled-children#risk-and-vulnerability-factors>

It's not always easy to spot the signs of abuse. In some cases, adults may mistake the indicators of abuse for signs of a child's disability.

- A child experiencing abuse or attempting to disclose abuse may self-harm or display inappropriate sexual behaviour or other repetitive and challenging behaviours. If this is misinterpreted as part of a child's disability or health condition rather than an indicator of abuse, it can prevent adults from taking action.
- Injuries such as bruising may not raise the same level of concern as they would if seen on a non-disabled child. Adults may assume that bruising was self-inflicted or caused by disability equipment or problems with mobility.

### **Increased isolation**

Disabled children may have less contact with other people than non-disabled children, because they have:

- fewer out of school opportunities than their peers
- fewer opportunities for spontaneous fun with friends
- less access to transport
- less provision for appropriate toilets and changing facilities
- difficulty finding out about accessible events (Franklin, 2016).

This means they have fewer people to turn to if they need help or support. They may be further isolated if they:

- need carers to take them out
- have restricted independence because they use a wheelchair or require a sign language interpreter
- live away from home at a residential school.

Disabled children and their families may have limited access to support systems. Support may not be available due to lack of funding or it may not be appropriate for the child's physical, emotional or cultural needs. This can make it difficult for parents to provide the care their child needs and add to the pressure of caring for a disabled child.

### **Dependency on others**

Children with disabilities may have regular contact with a wide network of carers and other adults for practical assistance in daily living including personal intimate care. This can increase the opportunity for an abusive adult to be alone with a child.

If a child is abused by a carer they rely on, they may be more reluctant to disclose abuse for fear that the support service will stop.

Caring for a child with little or no support can put families under stress. This can make it difficult for parents to provide the care their child needs and can lead to a child being abused or neglected.

### **Inadequate support**

It can be difficult for any child who has experienced abuse to get the support they need, but disabled children may face extra problems.

- Disabled children are less likely to tell someone about experiencing abuse and more likely to delay telling someone than their non-disabled peers (Hershkowitz, Lamb and Horowitz, 2007).
- Adults may not understand or respond to a disabled child's safeguarding needs.
- Communication barriers may prevent adults fully understanding what the child is telling them.
- Some adults may not focus on a disabled child's views.
- If abuse is reported to the police and/or children's social care, the response may be affected if professionals lack skills or experience in working with disabled children.

Training is planned this year to help staff understand some of the barriers children with additional needs may face in reporting safeguarding concerns.

## **Children with Social Workers**

Most cases where social care are involved with children will already be picked up as part of our Level 3 and 4 procedures. We also request a monthly update from the Safeguarding Education Advisor to ensure we are supporting all those who need it.

Some children may enter private fostering arrangements and it should be noted that should these last for longer than 30 days, an assessment needs to be carried out by children's social care and school must inform them.

Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable

## **Safeguarding children who attend off-site alternative provision**

De la Salle has a small number of pupils who attend off-site alternative provision. We use registered providers and we undertake safeguarding checks, and reviews as agreed with the local authority with additional Keeping In Touch visits. We maintain safeguarding and academic responsibility for the pupils. No pupil is referred to AEP without following a graduated response and the Headteacher makes the final decision about any pupils learning off-site. These pupils (safety and progress) are discussed in the fortnightly managerial meetings in school and SLT meetings. The lead member of staff will attend regular meetings at the provider with the host provider, pupil, parents/carers and any other appropriate parties, to discuss progress. Our school makes daily contact with any providers to check on daily attendance and any concerns around absence are picked up by our attendance team. The college may also provide pastoral support through counselling sessions at school, the provider or in the family home if suitable.

When identifying that a child would benefit from attending off site provision, our school will undertake an assessment to determine that this placement is in the best interests of the child. We will ensure that the provision identified is suitable to meet the needs of that child. The school will retain responsibility for the safeguarding of any pupils we place in off-site provision. The school will undertake appropriate quality assurance checks to ensure that it is a safe place for the child to attend. The school will obtain written confirmation from the provider that the appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out in respect of individuals working at the establishment. The school will have a formal agreement with the alternative provision and parent/carer regarding when the pupil should attend and what procedures that will be followed should the child not attend the placement. The school will ensure it seeks the views of the young people at off-site provision to ensure they feel happy and safe. When commissioning places at alternative provision, the school will pay due regard to Working together to improve school attendance, Alternative provision – DfE Statutory Guidance and Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school – DfE Statutory Guidance.

Our school is responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils who are educated off site. We will ensure that the appropriate coding is used within attendance registers. If we use the B code, we have confirmed that the child is attending an education provision that is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. We will ensure that we have arrangements in place where the provider of the provision will notify the school of any absences. Our attendance policy will be followed in these circumstances.

## **35 De La Salle – Preventing Radicalisation**

At De La Salle we promote British values within the framework of Lasallian values.

It is, however, worth noting that we have had incidents of Islamophobic comments and school must always be cognisant of the fact that radicalisation can be in both directions. It is not all about Islamic radicalisation but also includes radicalisation to the far-right and expressing extremist misogynistic views.

We also aware that being inducted into a gang can be a form of radicalisation, especially vulnerable to this is our cohort of white, working class boys.

## **What is the Prevent duty?**

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which came into force on 1 July 2015, requires certain authorities, including schools, to "have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism". This is known as the '**Prevent duty**'.

The duty covers all types of extremism, whether political, religious or ideological.

The guidance summarises the requirements of schools and child care providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. Our school will ensure that staff are aware of the indicators of extremism and radicalisation and know how to respond in keeping with local and national guidance by completing regular training in relation to Prevent.

Staff will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral via Children's Services to the **Channel** programme. We have had one student who was identified as expressing extreme views on line and following our referral, he worked with the Channel team and a specialist mentor over a period of time.

## **Channel**

School staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a programme, which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

Equally children will be made aware of the risks and support available to them. We will ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. The Government has developed an '**educate against hate**' website providing information and resources for schools and parents to support them to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people. Given Merseyside is a priority area, schools can seek additional advice, guidance and training from the Local Authority's Prevent Coordinator or Local Authority's Prevent Education Officer

This section has been added to the Child Protection Policy but should be taken in conjunction with the Statement of British Values, the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Equality Policy. We currently have no pupils about whom we are concerned around the issues of links with terrorism. We keep this under constant review.

## **What should staff do if they have a concern?**

Tell the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and make a written record, following our school's procedures. Always take action if you're worried

The Department for Education has a dedicated telephone helpline to enable school staff to raise concerns about extremism directly: 020 7340 7264.

You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)

Part of this response would be to provide a 'safe space' for the pupil to talk and to support the further steps required by the police or local authority.

## **The pupils follow the themes of the equality policy.**

We devised a bespoke unit of work within PSHCE for a half-term. We followed this with work on refugees and led into British Values

De La Salle aims to be nimble with the content of PSHCE and we are working with student groups such as the 17-19 society, MVPs and Anthony Walker Ambassadors on issues such as tackling racism in school, knife crime, sexism in school/sexual harassment and celebrating diversity.

## 36 The Safeguarding Curriculum

Our safeguarding curriculum can be found on the PHSCE section of the website. All pupils have PHSCE/RSE lessons in addition to RSE delivered by their form tutor. All aspects of safeguarding are covered through the course content which also focuses on contextual safeguarding. The PHSCE coordinator liaises with our safer Schools Policer officer and the Head of Care and Safeguarding in the review of the curriculum. This area of the curriculum is line managed by an AHT who works closely with the DSL.

The school will ensure it has a curriculum map which sets out how to help children keep themselves safe from harm. This will include messages which are taught through the [Relationships education, relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#) and PSHCE curriculums, alongside standalone pieces of work and messages delivered through other curriculum areas, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Children will be provided with age appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to help them recognise and respond to issues such as consent and healthy relationships. Children will be supported to develop their understanding, at the appropriate age, of risks including: when using technology, the internet, and risks associated with grooming and radicalisation, gang and criminal exploitation and misusing drugs and alcohol. The curriculum will include specific sequenced lessons to address sexual harassment, online abuse, sexual violence and issues of consent in an age and stage appropriate way.

Our school recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children may be necessary. Children will also learn about the wider safeguarding curriculum which for children would include road safety, anti-bullying and know how to seek support when needed. The school will ensure the curriculum promotes an understanding of the values needed to live within a democratic society including the rule of law, and individual liberty. It will promote tolerance and respect for all faiths (and those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations.

### Proactive Safeguarding

Our school recognises that school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing them with opportunities to learn, good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive peers and an ethos of protection. As a result, safeguarding and child protection is at the heart of everything and underpins all policy and procedures within our school.

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

Our school recognises that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy should consider the context within which such incidents or behaviours occur. This is known as **contextual safeguarding, or extra- familial harm**, which means 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.

In order to maintain a whole school approach to safeguarding, our school community will:

- a) Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to. This ethos will be modelled and replicated by staff and governors who promote a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- b) Ensure that the school site is a safe, secure and welcoming place to learn and grow.
- c) Encourage self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum as well as through personal relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- d) Include regular consultation with children e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week, etc.
- e) Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- f) Include safeguarding messages across the full curriculum, including PHSCE, to ensure that the children are equipped with the skills they need to recognise risky behaviours, stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular this will include In particular

this will include e.g. staying safe online, anti-bullying, e-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training, working with our primary colleagues to prepare for transition to Secondary school and more personal safety/independent travel, issues around consent, sexting, positive mental health, etc.

- g) Offer a positive school experience.
- h) Ensure all staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks
- i) Ensure that all staff, volunteers, governors, policies and procedures operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

### **37 Monitoring and Quality Assurance**

Policies and procedures only remain effective if they are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that they are still applicable and relevant. Our school and its governors recognise the importance of monitoring and quality assuring the effectiveness of our child protection policy and the procedures set out within it. The aim of monitoring and evaluating the child protection policy is to learn from practical experience, which will contribute to inform policy reviews and future changes to the policy and procedures. The process of monitoring and quality assurance will help the school and governors to identify the policy strengths and weaknesses, and will help to provide an understanding of the reasons for these, so that decisions can be made to resolve any limitations with immediate effect.

Monitoring and evaluation will be done by checking whether the standards from the child protection policy are implemented and whether safeguards are working and will be undertaken throughout the year by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Head teacher and the Chair of Governors. Activities which could form part of the ongoing monitoring of effectiveness are:

Monitoring and evaluation will be done by checking whether the standards from the child protection policy are implemented and whether safeguards are working and will be undertaken throughout the year by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Head teacher and the Chair of Governors. Activities which could form part of the ongoing monitoring of effectiveness are:

- Scrutiny of the Single Central Record and personnel files to ensure pre-employment checks are robust and up-to-date, and that job descriptions for new positions include reference to child protection, etc.
- Scrutiny of the school's annual 175 safeguarding audit by the Chair of Governors and Link Governor for Safeguarding, alongside the full governing body having oversight of any actions arising from the audit.
- Confirmation that training has been undertaken according to planned schedule and that all relevant staff and volunteers have participated
- There is effective analysis of safeguarding data including bullying, attendance, exclusions, behaviour logs, pupils taken off roll, the views and progress and participation of vulnerable students. In particular, the school will monitor the link between attendance and safeguarding and those persistently absent, frequently late, missing school (including part of the school day) or those who suddenly stop attending.
- Safeguarding briefings are held every three weeks which all staff must attend.
- Methods such as safeguarding training questionnaires, assessments and quizzes used to evidence the effectiveness of staff training
- All safeguarding materials, updates, presentations and fact sheets are available to the whole staff via the De La Salle intranet
- Regular meetings with staff, volunteers and our pupils which include the opportunity to discuss safeguarding and child protection, or use of questionnaires to evidence this
- Safeguarding learning walks designed to evidence and test out key safeguarding standards.
- Adapting and amending the policy and procedures outside of their annual review date to reflect current issues which may have recently arisen in order to ensure that all children are protected at all times.
- We have fortnightly safeguarding meetings with the whole team in which we discuss all updates and evaluate support for the children on 'The Vulnerable list'. This will include (but not limited

to) CWLAC/PLAC, AEP, CP, CiN, EHAT YC EHCP.

- We have fortnightly meetings with key pastoral staff, Safer Schools Police Officer, EWO and SLT provide early identification of concerns, particularly relating to attendance and safeguarding.

## **Appendix 1 – These appendices are based on the Department for Education’s statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education**

Safeguarding is everyone’s duty and everyone **must** have read the school’s child protection and safeguarding policy and part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023. This is a statutory duty and school has to check that it has taken place. All members of the school community should feel confident to report any concerns over the safety of any other member of the community. If there are areas of safeguarding that you feel you need more training on, you should inform A De’Ath.

Should a student, parent, member of staff or governor suspect a child is at risk they should:

1. Complete an incident form on CPOMS alerting DSL, Anna De’Ath and DDSLs as soon as possible, the Head of Year and Pastoral Support Manager should also be included on the alert.
2. A. De’Ath/P. Ross will co-ordinate appropriate actions.

If there is a concern about A. De’Ath/P Ross the issue should be referred to the Head. If the concern is with Mr. Rannard or in the actions or procedures that school has taken or follows, the member of the community should contact Teresa Sims, Chair of Governors. Alternatively, they could ring the NSPCC’s whistleblowing hotline - **Call 0800 028 0285** or **Email help@nspcc.org.uk**

## Appendix 2

**Abuse**, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- 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 participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- 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 (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Appendix 3: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures**

### **Recruitment and selection process**

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

### **Advertising**

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

### **Application forms**

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

### **Shortlisting**

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
  - If they have a criminal history
  - Whether they are included on the barred list
  - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
  - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
  - Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

### **Seeking references and checking employment history**

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the

- headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

### **Interview and selection**

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children ➤ Record all information considered and decisions made

### **Pre-appointment vetting checks**

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

### **New staff**

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterward
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
  - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
  - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

### **Existing staff**

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or

- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

### **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

### **Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

### **Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

### **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

### **Governors**

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

## Appendix 4: Flowchart for referral of concerns

### Safeguarding Procedures

